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THE

WORKS

OF THE

REV. JOHN WITHERSPOON, D. D. L. L. D.

LATE PRESIDENT OF THE COLLEGE AT PRINCETON,

NEW-JERSEY.

TO WHICH IS PREFIXED

An Account of the Author's Life, in a Sermon occaſioned by his Death,

BY THE REV. DR. JOHN RODGERS,

OF NEW-YORK.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.——VOL. III.

SECOND EDITION, REVISED AND CORRECTED.

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A

PASTORAL LETTER

FROM THE

SYNOD OF NEW-YORK AND PHILADELPHIA,

To the Congregations under their Care; to be read from the Pulpits on Thursday, June 29, 1775, being the Day of the general Fast.

VERY DEAR BRETHREN,

THE Synod of New-York and Philadelphia, being met at a time when public affairs wear ſo threatning an aſpect, and when (unleſs God in his ſovereign Providence ſpeedily prevent it) all the horrors of a civil war throughout this great continent are to be apprehended, were of opinion, that they could not diſcharge their duty to the numerous congregations under their care, without addreſſing them at this important criſis. As the firm belief, and habitual recollection of the power and preſence of the living God, ought at all times to poſſeſs the minds of real Chriſtians, ſo in ſeaſons of public calamity, when *the Lord is known by the judgment which he executeth*, it would be an ignorance or indifference highly criminal not to look up to him with reverence, to implore his mercy by humble and fervent prayer, and, if poſſible, to prevent his vengeance by unfeigned repentance.

We do, therefore, brethren, beſeech you in the moſt earneſt manner, to look beyond the immediate authors either of your ſufferings or fears, and to acknowledge the holineſs and juſtice of the *Almighty* in the preſent viſitation. *He is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works.—Affliction springeth not out of the dust.—He doth not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men;* and therefore, it becomes every perſon, family, city, and province, to humble themſelves before his throne, to confeſs their ſins, by which they have provoked his indignation, and intreat him to pour out upon all ranks a ſpirit of repentance and of prayer. Fly alſo for forgiveneſs to the atoning blood of the great Redeemer, *the blood of ſprinkling which ſpeaketh better things than that of Abel.* Remember and confeſs not only your ſins in general, but thoſe prevalent national offences which may be juſtly conſidered as the procuring cauſes of public judgments; particularly profaneneſs and contempt of God, his name, ſabbaths and ſanctuary;—pride, luxury, uncleanneſs, and neglect of family religion and government, with the deplorable ignorance and ſecurity which certainly ought to be imputed to this as their principal cauſe. All theſe are, among us, highly aggravated by the ineſtimable privileges, which we have hitherto enjoyed without interruption ſince the firſt ſettlement of this country. If in the preſent day of diſtreſs we expect that God will hear our ſupplications, and interpoſe for our protection or deliverance, let us remember what he himſelf requires of us is, that our prayers ſhould be attended with a ſincere purpoſe, and thorough endeavor after perſonal and family reformation: *If thou prepare thine heart, and ſtretch out thy hand towards him; If iniquity be in thine hand, put it far away, and let not wickedness dwell in thy tabernacles*, Job xi. 13, 14.

The Synod cannot help thinking, that this is a proper time for preſſing all of every rank, ſeriouſly to conſider the things that belong to their eternal peace. Hoſtilities, long feared, have now taken place,—the ſword has been drawn in one province,—and the whole continent, with hardly any exception, ſeem determined to defend their rights by force of arms. If, at the ſame time, the Britiſh

miniſtry ſhall continue to enforce their claims by violence, a laſting and bloody conteſt muſt be expected: Surely then it becomes thoſe who have taken up arms, and profeſs a willingneſs to hazard their lives in the cauſe of liberty, to be prepared for death, which to many muſt be the certain, and to every one is a poſſible or probable event.

We have long ſeen with concern, the circumſtances which occaſioned, and the gradual increaſe of this unhappy difference. As miniſters of the goſpel of peace, we have ardently wiſhed that it could, and often hoped that it would have been more early accommodated. It is well known to you (otherwiſe it would be imprudent indeed thus publicly to profeſs) that we have not been inſtrumental in inflaming the minds of the people, or urging them to acts of violence and diſorder:—Perhaps no inſtance can be given on ſo intereſting a ſubject, in which political ſentiments have been ſo long and ſo fully kept from the pulpit, and even malice itſelf has not charged us with laboring from the preſs; but things are now come to ſuch a ſtate, that as we do not wiſh to conceal our opinions as men and citizens, ſo the relation we ſtand in to you ſeemed to make the preſent improvement of it to your ſpiritual benefit an indiſpenſible duty. Suffer us then to lay hold of your preſent temper of mind, and to exhort, eſpecially the young and vigorous, by aſſuring them, that there is no ſoldier ſo undaunted as the pious man, no army ſo formidable as thoſe who are ſuperior to the fear of death. There is nothing more awful to think of, than that thoſe whoſe trade is war ſhould be deſpiſers of the name of the Lord of hoſts, and that they ſhould expoſe themſelves to the imminent danger, of being immediately ſent from curſing and cruelty on earth, to the blaſpheming rage and deſpairing horror of the infernal pit. Let therefore every one, who from generoſity of ſpirit, or benevolence of heart, offers himſelf as a champion in his country's cauſe, be perſuaded to reverence the name, and walk in the fear of the *Prince of the kings of the earth*, and then he may, with the moſt unſhaken firmneſs, expect the iſſue either in victory or death.

Let it not be forgotten, that though for the wiſe ends of his Providence, it may pleaſe God, for a ſeaſon, to ſuffer his people to lie under unmerited oppreſſion, yet in general we may expect, that thoſe who fear and ſerve him in ſincerity and truth, will be favoured with his countenance and ſtrength. It is both the character and the privilege of the children of God, that they *call upon him in the day of trouble*, and he, who *keepeth covenant and truth forever*, has ſaid, that *his ears are always open to their cry*. We need not mention to you in how many inſtances the event in battles, and ſucceſs in war, have turned upon circumſtances which were inconſiderable in themſelves, as well as out of the power of human prudence to foreſee or direct, becauſe we ſuppoſe you firmly believe, that after all the counſels of men, and the moſt probable and promiſing means, the Lord will do *that which ſeemeth him good*; nor hath his promiſe ever failed of its full accompliſhment; "the Lord is with you while ye be with him, and if ye "ſeek him, he will be found of you; but if ye forſake him, "he will forſake you," 2 Chron. xv. 2.

After this exhortation, which we thought ourſelves called upon to give you at this time, on your great intereſt, *the one thing needful*, we ſhall take the liberty to offer a few advices to the ſocieties under our charge, as to their public and general conduct; and

Firſt, In carrying on this important ſtruggle, let every opportunity be taken to expreſs your attachment and reſpect to our ſovereign king George, and to the revolution principles, by which his auguſt family was ſeated on the Britiſh throne. We recommend, indeed, not only allegiance to him from duty and principle, as the firſt magiſtrate of the empire, but eſteem and reverence for the perſon of the prince, who has merited well of his ſubjects on many accounts, and who has probably been miſled into the late and preſent meaſures by thoſe about him; neither have we any doubt, that they themſelves have been in a great degree deceived by falſe information from intereſted perſons reſiding in America. It gives us the greateſt pleaſure to ſay, from our own certain knowledge of all belonging to our communion, and from the beſt means of infor-

mation, of the far greateſt part of all denominations in this country, that the preſent oppoſition to the meaſures of adminiſtration does not in the leaſt ariſe from diſaffection to the king, or a deſire of ſeparation from the parent ſtate. We are happy in being able with truth to affirm, that no part of America would either have approved or permitted ſuch inſults as have been offered to the ſovereign in Great-Britain. We exhort you, therefore, to continue in the ſame diſpoſition, and not to ſuffer oppreſſion or injury itſelf eaſily to provoke you to any thing which may ſeem to betray contrary ſentiments: let it ever appear, that you only deſire the preſervation and ſecurity of thoſe rights which belong to you as freemen and Britons, and that reconciliation upon theſe terms is your moſt ardent deſire.

Secondly, Be careful to maintain the union which at preſents ſubſiſts through all the colonies; nothing can be more manifeſt than that the ſucceſs of every meaſure depends on its being inviolably preſerved, and therefore, we hope, that you will leave nothing undone which can promote that end. In particular as the Continental Congreſs, now ſitting at Philadelphia, conſiſt of delegates choſen in the moſt free and unbiaſſed manner, by the body of the people, let them not only be treated with reſpect, and encouraged in their difficult ſervice—not only let your prayers be offered up to God for his direction in their proceedings—but adhere firmly to their reſolutions; and let it be ſeen that they are able to bring out the whole ſtrength of this vaſt country to carry them into execution. We would alſo adviſe for the ſame purpoſe, that a ſpirit of candor, charity and mutual eſteem be preſerved, and promoted towards thoſe of different religious denominations. Perſons of probity and principle of every profeſſion, ſhould be united together as ſervants of the ſame maſter, and the experience of our happy concord hitherto in a ſtate of liberty ſhould engage all to unite in ſupport of the common intereſt; for there is no example in hiſtory, in which civil liberty was deſtroyed, and the rights of conſcience preſerved entire.

Thirdly, We do earneſtly exhort and beſeech the ſocieties under our care to be ſtrict and vigilant in their private government, and to watch over the morals of their ſeveral members. It is with the utmoſt pleaſure we remind you, that the laſt Continental Congreſs determined to diſcourage luxury in living, public diverſions, and gaming of all kinds, which have ſo fatal an influence on the morals of the people. If it is undeniable, that univerſal profligacy makes a nation ripe for divine judgments, and is the natural mean of bringing them to ruin, reformation of manners is of the utmoſt neceſſity in our preſent diſtreſs. At the ſame time, as it has been obſerved by many eminent writers, that the cenſorial power, which had for its object the manners of the public in the ancient free ſtates, was abſolutely neceſſary to their continuance, we cannot help being of opinion, that the only thing which we have now to ſupply the place of this is the religious diſcipline of the ſeveral ſects with reſpect to their own members; ſo that the denomination or profeſſion which ſhall take the moſt effectual care of the inſtruction of its members, and maintain its diſcipline in the fulleſt vigor, will do the moſt eſſential ſervice to the whole body. For the very ſame reaſon the greateſt ſervice which magiſtrates or perſon in authority can do with reſpect to the religion or morals of the people, is to defend and ſecure the rights of conſcience in the moſt equal and impartial manner.

Fourthly, We cannot but recommend, and urge in the warmeſt manner, a regard to order and the public peace; and as in many places, during the confuſions that prevail, legal proceedings have become difficult, it is hoped, that all perſons will conſcientiouſly pay their juſt debts, and to the utmoſt of their power ſerve one another, ſo that the evils inſeparable from a civil war may not be augmented by wantonneſs and irregularity.

Fifthly, We think it of importance, at this time, to recommend to all of every rank, but eſpecially to thoſe who may be called to action, a ſpirit of humanity and mercy. *Every battle of the warrior is with confused noise, and garments rolled in blood.* It is impoſſible to appeal to the ſword without being expoſed to many ſcenes of cruelty

and ſlaughter; but it is often obſerved that civil wars are carried on with a rancor and ſpirit of revenge much greater than thoſe between independent ſtates. The injuries received or ſuppoſed in civil wars wound more deeply than thoſe of foreign enemies; it is therefore the more neceſſary to guard againſt this abuſe, and recommend that meekneſs and gentleneſs of ſpirit, which is the nobleſt attendant on true valor. That man will fight moſt bravely, who never fights till it is neceſſary, and who ceaſes to fight as ſoon as the neceſſity is over.

Laſtly, We would recommend to all the ſocieties under our care, not to content themſelves with attending devoutly on general faſt, but to continue habitually in the exerciſe of prayer, and to have frequent occaſional voluntary meetings for ſolemn interceſſion with God on the important trial. Thoſe who are immediately expoſed to danger need your ſympathy; and we learn from the ſcriptures, that fervency and importunity are the very characters of that prayer of *the righteouss man which availeth much.*

We conclude with our earneſt prayer, that the God of heaven may bleſs you in your temporal and ſpiritual concerns, and that the preſent unnatural diſpute may be ſpeedily terminated by an equitable and laſting ſettlement on conſtitutional principles.

The DOMINION of PROVIDENCE OVER the PASSIONS of MEN.

SERMON 44.

Preached at Princeton, on the 17th of May, 1776, being the General Faſt appointed by the Congreſs through the United Colonies. Dedicated to the Hon. John Hancock, Eſq. Preſident of the Congreſs of the United States of America. To which is added, an Addreſs to the natives of Scotland reſiding in America.

Psalm lxxvi. 10.

Surely the Wrath of Man shall praise thee; the remainder of Wrath shalt thou restrain.

THERE is not a greater evidence either of the reality or the power of religion, than a firm belief of God's univerſal preſence, and a conſtant attention to the influence and operation of his providence. It is by this means that the Chriſtian may be ſaid, in the emphatical ſcripture language, "to walk with God, and to endure as ſeeing "him who is inviſible."

The doctrine of divine providence is very full and complete in the ſacred oracles. It extends not only to things which we may think of great moment, and therefore wor-

thy of notice, but to things the moſt indifferent and inconſiderable; "Are not two ſparrows ſold for a farthing," ſays our Lord, "and one of them falleth not to the ground "without your heavenly Father;" nay, "the very hairs of "your head are all numbered. It extends not only to things beneficial and ſalutary, or to the direction and aſſiſtance of thoſe who are the ſervants of the living God; but to things ſeemingly moſt hurtful and deſtructive, and to perſons the moſt refractory and diſobedient. He overrules all his creatures, and all their actions. Thus we are told, that "fire, hail, ſnow, vapour, and ſtormy wind, "fulfil his word," in the courſe of nature; and even ſo the moſt impetuous and diſorderly paſſions of men, that are under no reſtraint from themſelves, are yet perfectly ſubject to the dominion of Jehovah. They carry his commiſſion, they obey his orders, they are limited and reſtrained by his authority, and they conſpire with every thing elſe in promoting his glory. There is the greater need to take notice of this, that men are not generally ſufficiently aware of the diſtinction between the law of God and his purpoſe; they are apt to ſuppoſe, that as the temper of the ſinner is contrary to the one, ſo the outrages of the ſinner are able to defeat the other; than which nothing can be more falſe. The truth is plainly aſſerted, and nobly expreſſed by the pſalmiſt in the text, "Surely the "wrath of man ſhall praiſe thee; the remainder of wrath "ſhalt thou reſtrain."

This pſalm was evidently compoſed as a ſong of praiſe for ſome ſignal victory obtained, which was at the ſame time a remarkable deliverance from threatening danger. The author was one or other of the later prophets, and the occaſion probably the unſucceſsful aſſault of Jeruſalem, by the army of Sennacherib king of Aſſyria, in the days of Hezekiah. Great was the inſolence and boaſting of his generals and ſervants againſt the city of the living God, as may be ſeen in the thirty-ſixth chapter of Iſaiah. Yet it pleaſed God to deſtroy their enemies, and, by his own immediate interpoſition, to grant them deliverance. Therefore the Pſalmiſt ſays in the fifth and ſixth verſes of

this pſalm, " The ſtout-hearted are ſpoiled, they have " ſlept their ſleep. None of the men of might have found " their hands. At thy rebuke, O God of Jacob! both the " chariot and the horſe are caſt into a deep ſleep." After a few more remarks to the ſame purpoſe, he draws the inference, or makes the reflection in the text, " Surely the " wrath of man ſhall praiſe thee; the remainder of wrath " ſhalt thou reſtrain: which may be paraphraſed thus, The fury and injuſtice of oppreſſors ſhall bring in a tribute of praiſe to thee; the influence of thy righteous providence ſhall be clearly diſcerned; the countenance and ſupport thou wilt give to thine own people ſhall be glorioufly illuſtrated; thou ſhalt ſet the bounds which the boldeſt cannot paſs.

I am ſenſible, my brethren, that the time and occaſion of this pſalm, may ſeem to be in one reſpect ill ſuited to the intereſting circumſtances of this country at preſent. It was compoſed after the victory was obtained; whereas we are now but putting on the harneſs and entering upon an important conteſt, the length of which it is impoſſible to foreſee, and the iſſue of which it will perhaps be thought preſumption to foretell. But as the truth, with reſpect to God's moral government, is the ſame and unchangeable; as the iſſue, in the caſe of Sennacherib's invaſion, did but lead the prophet to acknowledge it; our duty and intereſt conſpire in calling upon us to improve it. And I have choſen to inſiſt upon it on this day of ſolemn humiliation, as it will probably help us to a clear and explicit view of what ſhould be the chief ſubject of our prayers and endeavors, as well as the great object of our hope and truſt, in our preſent ſituation.

The truth, then, aſſerted in this text, which I propoſe to illuſtrate and improve, is,—That all the diſorderly paſſions of men, whether expoſing the innocent to private injury, or whether they are the arrows of divine judgment in public calamity, ſhall, in the end, be to the praiſe of God: Or, to apply it more particularly to the preſent ſtate of the American Colonies, and the plague of war,—' The ambition of miſtaken princes, the cunning and cruelty of oppreſſive and corrupt miniſters, and

even the inhumanity of brutal ſoldiers, however dreadful, ſhall finally promote the glory of God, and in the mean time, while the ſtorm continues, his mercy and kindneſs ſhall appear in preſcribing bounds to their rage and fury.

In diſcourſing on this ſubject, it is my intention, through the aſſiſtance of divine grace,

I. To point out to you in ſome particulars, how the wrath of man praiſes God.

II. To apply theſe principles to our preſent ſituation, by inferences of truth for your inſtruction and comfort, and by ſuitable exhortations to duty in the important criſis.

In the *firſt* place, I am to point out to you in ſome particulars, how the wrath of man praiſes God. I ſay in *ſome* inſtances, becauſe it is far from being in my power, either to mention or explain the whole. There is an unſearchable depth in the divine counſels, which it is impoſſible for us to penetrate. It is the duty of every good man to place the moſt unlimited confidence in divine wiſdom, and to believe that thoſe meaſures of providence that are moſt unintelligible to him, are yet planned with the ſame ſkill, and directed to the ſame great purpoſes as others, the reaſon and tendency of which he can explain in the cleareſt manner. But where revelation and experience enables us to diſcover the wiſdom, equity, or mercy of divine providence, nothing can be more delightful or profitable to a ſerious mind, and therefore I beg your attention to the following remarks.

In the firſt place, the wrath of man praiſes God, as it is an example and illuſtration of divine truth, and clearly points out the corruption of our nature, which is the foundation ſtone of the doctrine of redemption. Nothing can be more abſolutely neceſſary to true religion, than a clear and full conviction of the ſinfulneſs of our nature and ſtate. Without this there can be neither repentance in the ſinner, nor humility in the believer. Without this all that is ſaid in ſcripture of the wiſdom and mercy of God in providing a Saviour, is without force and without meaning. Juſtly does our Saviour ſay, "The whole

" have no need of a phyſician, but thoſe that are ſick. I " came not to call the righteous, but ſinners to repen- " tance." Thoſe who are not ſenſible that they are ſinners, will treat every exhortation to repentance, and every offer of mercy, with diſdain or defiance.

But where can we have a more affecting view of the corruption of our nature, than in the wrath of man, when exerting itſelf in oppreſſion, cruelty and blood? It muſt be owned, indeed, that this truth is abundantly manifeſt in times of the greateſt tranquility. Others may, if they pleaſe, treat the corruption of our nature as a chimera: for my part, I feel it every where, and I feel it every day. All the diſorders in human ſociety, and the greateſt part even of the unhappineſs we are expoſed to, ariſes from the envy, malice, covetouſneſs, and other luſts of man. If we and all about us were juſt what we ought to be in all reſpects, we ſhould not need to go any further for heaven, for it would be upon earth. But war and violence preſent a ſpectacle ſtill more awful. How affecting is it to think, that the luſt of domination ſhould be ſo violent and univerſal? That men ſhould ſo rarely be ſatisfied with their own poſſeſſions and acquiſitions, or even with the benefit that would ariſe from mutual ſervice, but ſhould look upon the happineſs and tranquility of others, as an obſtruction to their own? That, as if the great law of nature, were not enough, " Duſt thou art, and to duſt thou " ſhalt return," they ſhould be ſo furiouſly ſet for the deſtruction of each other? It is ſhocking to think, ſince the firſt murder of Abel by his brother Cain, what havock has been made of man by man in every age. What is it that fills the pages of hiſtory, but the wars and contentions of princes and empires? What vaſt numbers has lawleſs ambition brought into the field, and delivered as a prey to the deſtructive ſword?

If we dwell a little upon the circumſtances, they become deeply affecting. The mother bears a child with pain, rears him by the laborious attendance of many years; yet in the prime of life, in the vigor of health, and bloom of beauty, in a moment he is cut down by the dreadful inſtruments of death. " Every battle of the warrior is with

" confuſed noiſe, and garments rolled in blood ;" but the horror of the ſcene is not confined to the field of ſlaughter. Few go there unrelated, or fall unlamented; in every hoſtile encounter, what muſt be the impreſſion upon the relations of the deceaſed ? The bodies of the dead can only be ſeen, or the cries of the dying heard for a ſingle day, but many days ſhall not put an end to the mourning of a parent for a beloved ſon, the joy and ſupport of his age, or of the widow and helpleſs offſpring, for a father taken away in the fullneſs of health and vigor.

But if this may be juſtly ſaid of all wars between man and man, what ſhall we be able to ſay that is ſuitable to the abhorred ſcene of civil war between citizen and citizen ? How deeply affecting is it, that thoſe who are the ſame in complexion, the ſame in blood, in language, and in religion, ſhould, notwithſtanding, butcher one another with unrelenting rage, and glory in the deed ? That men ſhould lay waſte the fields of their fellow ſubjects, with whoſe proviſion they themſelves had been often fed, and conſume with devouring fire thoſe houſes in which they had often found a hoſpitable ſhelter.

Theſe things are apt to overcome a weak mind with fear, or overwhelm it with ſorrow, and in the greateſt number are apt to excite the higheſt indignation, and kindle up a ſpirit of revenge. If this laſt has no other tendency than to direct and invigorate the meaſures of ſelf-defence, I do not take upon me to blame it, on the contrary, I call it neceſſary and laudable.

But what I mean at this time to prove by the preceding reflections, and wiſh to impreſs on your minds, is the depravity of our nature. James iv. 1. " From whence come " wars and fighting among you ? come they not hence even " from your luſts that war in your members ?" Men of lax and corrupt principles, take great delight in ſpeaking to the praiſe of human nature, and extolling its dignity, without diſtinguiſhing what it was, at its firſt creation, from what it is in its preſent fallen ſtate. Theſe fine ſpeculations are very grateful to a worldly mind. They are alſo much more pernicious to uncautious and unthinking youth, than even the temptations to a diſſolute and ſenſu-

al life, againſt which they are fortified by the dictates of natural conſcience, and a ſenſe of public ſhame. But I appeal from theſe viſionary reaſonings to the hiſtory of all ages, and the inflexible teſtimony of daily experience. Theſe will tell us what men have been in their practice, and from thence you may judge what they are by nature, while unrenewed. If I am not miſtaken, a cool and candid attention, either to the paſt hiſtory, or preſent ſtate of the world, but above all, to the ravages of lawleſs power, ought to humble us in the duſt. It ſhould at once lead us to acknowlege the juſt view given us in ſcripture of our loſt ſtate; to deſire the happy influence of renewing grace each for ourſelves; and to long for the dominion of righteouſneſs and peace, when "men ſhall beat their ſwords "into plow-ſhares, and their ſpears into pruning hooks; "when nation ſhall not lift up ſword againſt nation, nei- "ther ſhall they learn war any more."* Mic iv. 3.

* I cannot help embracing this opportunity of making a remark or two upon a virulent reflection thrown out againſt this doctrine, in a well known pamphlet, *Common Sense*. The author of that work expreſſes himſelf thus: "If the firſt king of "any country was by election, that likewiſe eſtabliſhes a pre- "cedent for the next; for to ſay, that the right of all future "generations is taken away, by the act of the firſt electors, "in their choice not only of a king, but of a family of kings "forever, hath no parallel in or out of ſcripure, but the doc- "trine of original ſin, which ſuppoſes the free will of all men "loſt in Adam; and from ſuch compariſon, and it will admit "of no other, hereditary ſucceſſion can derive no glory. For "as in Adam all ſinned, and as in the firſt electors all men "obeyed; as in the one all mankind were ſubjected to Satan, "and in the other to ſovereignty; as our innocence was loſt "in the firſt, and our authority in the laſt; and as both diſable "us from re-aſſuming ſome former ſtate and privilege, it un- "anſwerably follows that original ſin and hereditary ſucceſſion "are parallels. Diſhonorable rank! Inglorious connexion! "Yet the moſt ſubtle ſophiſt cannot produce a juſter ſimile."* Without the ſhadow of reaſoning, he is pleaſed to repreſent the doctrine of original ſin as an object of contempt or abhorrence. I beg leave to demur a little to the *candor*, the *prudence*, and the *juſtice* of this proceeding.

1. Was it *modeſt* or *candid* for a perſon without name or character, to talk in this ſupercilious manner of a doctrine that

* *Common Sense*, *page* 11. *Bradford's Edition.*

2. The wrath of man praiſeth God, as it is the inſtrument in his hand for bringing ſinners to repentance, and for the correction and improvement of his own children. Whatever be the nature of the affliction with which he viſits either perſons, families, or nations; whatever be the diſpoſition or intention of thoſe whoſe malice he employs as a ſcourge; the deſign on his part is, to rebuke men for iniquity, to bring them to repentance, and to promote their holineſs and peace. The ſalutary nature and ſanctifying influence of affliction in general, is often taken notice of in ſcripture, both as making a part of the purpoſe of

has been eſpouſed and defended by many of the greateſt and beſt men that the world ever ſaw, and makes an eſſential part of the eſtabliſhed Creeds and Confeſſions of all the Proteſtant churches without exception? I thought the grand modern plea had been freedom of ſentiment, and charitable thoughts of one another. Are ſo many of us, then, beyond the reach of this gentleman's charity? I do aſſure him that ſuch preſumption and ſelf-confidence are no recommendation to me, either of his character or ſentiments.

2. Was it *prudent*, when he was pleading a public cauſe, to ſpeak in ſuch approbious terms of a doctrine, which he knew, or ought to have known, was believed and profeſſed by, I ſuppoſe, a great majority of very different denominations. Is this gentleman ignorant of human nature, as well as an enemy to the Chriſtian faith? Are men ſo little tenacious of their religious ſentiments, whether true or falſe? The prophet thought otherwiſe, who ſaid, *Hath a nation changed their gods which yet are no gods?* Was it the way to obtain the favor of the public, to deſpiſe what they hold ſacred? Or ſhall we ſuppoſe this author ſo aſtoniſhingly ignorant, as to think that all men now, whoſe favor is worth aſking, have given up the doctrine of the New Teſtament? If he does, he is greatly miſtaken.

3. In fine, I aſk, where was the *juſtice* of this proceeding? Is there ſo little to be ſaid for the doctrine of original ſin, that it is not to be refuted, but deſpiſed? Is the ſtate of the world ſuch, as to render this doctrine not only falſe, but incredible? Has the fruit been of ſuch a quality as to exclude all doubts of the goodneſs of the tree? On the contrary, I cannot help being of opinion, that ſuch has been the viſible ſtate of the world in every age, as cannot be accounted for on any other principles than what we learn from the word of God, that *the imagination of the heart of man is only evil from his youth, and that continually.* Gen. vi. 5.—viii. 21.

God, and the experience of his ſaints. Heb. xii. 11. "Now, no affliction for the preſent ſeemeth to be joyous, "but grievous: Nevertheleſs, afterwards it yieldeth the "peaceable fruit of righteouſneſs unto them which are ex- "erciſed thereby." But what we are particularly led to obſerve by the ſubject of this diſcourſe is, that the wrath of man, or the violence of the oppreſſor that praiſeth God in this reſpect, it has a peculiar tendency to alarm the ſecure conſcience, to convince and humble the obſtinate ſinner. This is plain from the nature of the thing, and from the teſtimony of experience. Public calamities, particularly the deſtroying ſword, is ſo awful that it cannot but have a powerful influence in leading men to conſider the preſence and the power of God. It threatens them not only in themſelves, but touches them in all that is dear to them, whether relations or poſſeſſions. The prophet Iſaiah ſays, Iſ. xxvi. 8, 9. "Yea, in the way of thy "judgments, O Lord, have we waited for thee,—for "when thy judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of "the world will learn righteouſneſs." He conſiders it as the moſt powerful mean of alarming the ſecure and ſubduing the obſtinate. Iſ. xxvi. 11. "Lord when thy hand is "lifted up, they will not ſee, but they ſhall ſee and be "aſhamed for their envy at the people, yea the fire of "thine enemies ſhall devour them." It is alſo ſometimes repreſented as a ſymptom of a hopeleſs and irrecoverable ſtate, when public judgments have no effect. Thus ſays the prophet Jeremiah, Jer. v. 3. "O Lord, are not thine "eyes upon the truth? thou haſt ſtricken them, but they "have not grieved; thou haſt conſumed them, but they have "refuſed to receive correction: they have made their fa- "ces harder than a rock, they have refuſed to return." We can eaſily ſee in the hiſtory of the children of Iſrael, how ſevere ſtrokes brought them to ſubmiſſion and penitence. Pſ. lxxviii. 34, 35. "When he ſlew them, then "they ſought him, and they returned and inquired early "after God, and they remembered that God was their "rock, and the high God their redeemer."

Both nations in general, and private perſons, are apt to grow remiſs and lax in a time of proſperity and ſeeming

ſecurity; but when their earthly comforts are endangered or withdrawn, it lays them under a kind of neceſſity to ſeek for ſomething better in their place. Men muſt have comfort from one quarter or another. When earthly things are in a pleaſing and promiſing condition, too many are apt to find their reſt, and be ſatisfied with them as their only portion. But when the vanity and paſſing nature of all created comfort is diſcovered, they are compelled to look for ſomething more durable as well as valuable. What therefore, can be more to the praiſe of God, than that when a whole people have forgotten their reſting place, when they have abuſed their privileges, and deſpiſed their mercies, they ſhould by diſtreſs and ſuffering be made to hearken to the rod, and return to their duty?

There is an inexpreſſible depth and variety in the judgments of God, as in all his other works; but we may lay down this as a certain principle, that if there were no ſin, there could be no ſuffering. Therefore they are certainly for the correcton of ſin, or for the trial, illuſtration, and perfecting of the grace and virtue of his own people. We are not to ſuppoſe, that thoſe who ſuffer moſt, or who ſuffer ſooneſt, are therefore more criminal than others. Our Saviour himſelf thought it neceſſary to give a caution againſt this raſh concluſion, as we are informed by the evangeliſt Luke, Luke xiii. 1. "There were preſent at that ſeaſon "ſome that told him of the Galileans, whoſe blood Pilate "had mingled with their ſacrifices. And Jeſus anſwering "ſaid unto them, Suppoſe ye that theſe Galileans were "ſinners above all the Galileans, becauſe they ſuffered "ſuch things? I tell you nay, but except ye repent, ye "ſhall all likewiſe periſh." I ſuppoſe we may ſay with ſufficient warrant, that it often happens, that thoſe for whom God hath deſigns of the greateſt mercy, are firſt brought to the trial, that they may enjoy in due time the ſalutary effect of the unpalatable medicine.

I muſt alſo take leave to obſerve, and I hope no pious humble ſufferer will be unwilling to make the application, that there is often a diſcernible mixture of ſovereignty and righteouſneſs in providential diſpenſations. It is the prerogative of God to do what he will with his own, but he

often diſplays his juſtice itſelf, by throwing into the furnace thoſe, who though they may not be viſibly worſe than others, may yet have more to anſwer for, as having been favored with more diſtinguiſhed privileges, both civil and ſacred. It is impoſſible for us to make a juſt and full compariſon of the character either of perſons or nations, and it would be extremely fooliſh for any to attempt it, either for increaſing their own ſecurity, or impeaching the juſtice of the Supreme Ruler. Let us therefore neither forget the truth, nor go beyond it. "His mercy fills the earth." He is alſo "known by the judgment which he executeth." The wrath of man in its moſt tempeſtuous rage, fulfills his will, and finally promotes the good of his choſen.

3. The wrath of man praiſeth God, as he ſets bounds to it, or reſtrains it by his providence, and ſometimes makes it evidently a mean of promoting and illuſtrating his glory.

There is no part of divine providence in which a greater beauty and majeſty appears, than when the Almighty Ruler turns the counſels of wicked men into confuſion, and makes them militate againſt themſelves. If the pſalmiſt may be thought to have had a view in this text to the truths illuſtrated in the two former obſervations, there is no doubt at all that he had a particular view to this, as he ſays in the latter part of the verſe, "the remainder of wrath "ſhalt thou reſtrain." The ſcripture abounds with inſtances, in which the deſigns of oppreſſors were either wholly diſappointed, or in execution fell far ſhort of the malice of their intention, and in ſome they turned out to the honor and happineſs of the perſons or the people, whom they were intended to deſtroy. We have an inſtance of the firſt of theſe in the hiſtory to which my text relates.* We have alſo an inſtance in Eſther, in which the moſt miſchievous deſigns of Haman, the Son of Hammedatha the Agagite againſt Mordecai the Jew, and the nation from which he ſprung, turned out at laſt to his own deſtruction, the honor of Mordecai, and the ſalvation and peace of his people.

* The matter is fully ſtated and reaſoned upon by the prophet Iſaiah ch. x. from the 5th to the 19th verſe.

From the New Teſtament I will make choice of that memorable event on which the ſalvation of believers in every age reſts as its foundation, the death and ſufferings of the Son of God. This the great adverſary and all his agents and inſtruments proſecuted with unrelenting rage. When they had blackened him with ſlander, when they ſcourged him with ſhame, when they had condemned him in judgment, and nailed him to the croſs, how could they help eſteeming their victory complete? But oh the unſearchable wiſdom of God! they were but perfecting the great deſign laid for the ſalvation of ſinners. Our bleſſed Redeemer by his death finiſhed his work, overcame principalities and powers, and made a ſhew of them openly, triumphing over them in his croſs. With how much juſtice do the apoſtles and their company offer this doxology to God, "They lift up their voice with one accord, and ſaid, Lord thou art God which haſt made heaven and earth, and the ſea, and all that in them is; "Who by the mouth of thy ſervant David haſt ſaid, Why "did the Heathen rage, and the people imagine vain "things? The kings of the earth ſtood up, and the rulers "were gathered together againſt the Lord, and againſt his "Chriſt. For of a truth, againſt thy holy Child Jeſus, "whom thou haſt anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Iſrael were "gathered together, for to do whatſoever thy hand and thy "counſel determined before to be done." Acts iv. 24. 28.

In all after ages, in conformity to this, the deepeſt laid contrivances of the prince of darkneſs, have turned out to the confuſion of their author; and I know not, but conſidering his malice and pride, this perpetual diſappointment, and the ſuperiority of divine wiſdom, may be one great ſource of his ſuffering and torment. The croſs hath ſtill been the banner of truth, under which it hath been carried through the world. Perſecution has been but as the furnace to the gold, to purge it of its droſs, to manifeſt its purity, and increaſe its luſtre. It was taken notice of very early, that the blood of the martyrs was the ſeed of chriſtianity; the more abundantly it was ſhed, the more plentifully did the harveſt grow.

So certain has this appeared, that the moſt violent infidels, both of early and later ages, have endeavored to account for it, and have obſerved that there is a ſpirit of obſtinacy in man which inclines him to reſiſt violence, and that ſeverity doth but increaſe oppoſition, be the cauſe what it will. They ſuppoſe that perſecution is equally proper to propagate truth and error. This though in part true, will by no means generally hold. Such an apprehenſion, however, gave occaſion to a glorious triumph of divine providence of an oppoſite kind, which I muſt ſhortly relate to you. One of the Roman emperors, Julian, ſurnamed the apoſtate, perceiving how impoſſible it was to ſuppreſs the goſpel by violence, endeavored to extinguiſh it by neglect and ſcorn. He left the Chriſtians unmoleſted for ſometime, but gave all manner of encouragement to thoſe of oppoſite principles, and particularly to the Jews, out of hatred to the Chriſtians; and that he might bring public diſgrace upon the Galileans, as he affected to ſtile them, he encouraged the Jews to rebuild the temple of Jeruſalem, and viſibly refute the prophecy of Chriſt, that it ſhould lie under perpetual deſolation. But this profane attempt was ſo ſignally fruſtrated, that it ſerved, as much as any one circumſtance, to ſpread the glory of our Redeemer, and eſtabliſh the faith of his ſaints. It is affirmed by ſome ancient authors, particularly by Ammianus Marcellinus, a heathen hiſtorian, that fire came out of the earth and conſumed the workmen when laying the foundation. But in whatever way it was prevented, it is beyond all controverſy, from the concurring teſtimony of Heathens and Chriſtians, that little or no progreſs was ever made in it, and that in a ſhort time, it was entirely defeated.

It is proper here to obſerve, that at the time of the reformation, when religion began to revive, nothing contributed more to facilitate its reception and increaſe its progreſs than the violence of its perſecutors. Their cruelty and the patience of the ſufferers, naturally diſpoſed men to examine and weigh the cauſe to which they adhered with ſo much conſtancy and reſolution. At the ſame time alſo, when they were perſecuted in one city, they

fled to another, and carried the diſcoveries of Popiſh fraud to every part of the world. It was by ſome of thoſe who were perſecuted in Germany, that the light of the reformation was brought ſo early into Britain.

The power of divine providence appears with the moſt diſtinguiſhed luſtre, when ſmall and inconſiderable circumſtances, and ſometimes, the weather and ſeaſons, have defeated the moſt formidable armaments, and fruſtrated the beſt concerted expeditions. Near two hundred years ago, the monarchy of Spain was in the height of its power and glory, and determined to cruſh the intereſt of the reformation. They ſent out a powerful armament againſt Britain, giving it oſtentatiouſly, and in my opinion profanely, the name of the Invincible Armada. But it pleaſed God ſo entirely to diſcomfit it by tempeſts, that a ſmall part of it returned home, though no Britiſh force had been oppoſed to it at all.

We have a remarkable inſtance of the influence of ſmall circumſtances in providence in the Engliſh hiſtory. The two moſt remarkable perſons in the civil wars, had earneſtly deſired to withdraw themſelves from the contentions of the times, Mr. Hampden and Oliver Cromwell. They had actually taken their paſſage in a ſhip for New-England, when by an arbitrary order of council they were compelled to remain at home. The conſequence of this was, that one of them was the ſoul of the republican oppoſition to monarchical uſurpation during the civil wars, and the other in the courſe of that conteſt, was the great inſtrument in bringing the tyrant to the block.

The only other hiſtorical remark I am to make, is, that the violent perſecution which many eminent Chriſtians met with in England from their brethren, who called themſelves Proteſtants, drove them in great numbers to a diſtant part of the world, where the light of the goſpel and true religion were unknown. Some of the American ſettlements, particularly thoſe in New-England, were chiefly made by them; and as they carried the knowledge of Chriſt to the dark places of the earth, ſo they continue themſelves in as great a degree of purity, of faith, and ſtrictneſs of practice, or rather a greater, than is

to be found in any proteſtant church now in the world. Does not the wrath of man in this inſtance praiſe God? Was not the accuſer of the brethren, who ſtirs up their enemies, thus taken in his own craftineſs, and his kingdom ſhaken by the very means which he employed to eſtabliſh it.*

II. proceed now to the ſecond general head, which was to apply the principles illuſtrated above to our preſent ſituation, by inferences of truth for your inſtruction and comfort, and by ſuitable exhortations to duty in this important criſis. And,

In the firſt place, I would take the opportunity on this occaſion, and from this ſubject, to preſs every hearer to a ſincere concern for his own ſoul's ſalvation. There are times when the mind may be expected to be more awake to divine truth, and the conſcience more open to the arrows of conviction, than at others. A ſeaſon of public judgment is of this kind, as appears from what has been already ſaid. That curioſity and attention at leaſt are raiſed in ſome degree, is plain from the unuſual throng of this aſſembly. Can you have a clearer view of the ſinfulneſs of your nature, than when the rod of the oppreſſor is lifted up, and when you ſee men putting on the habit of the warrior, and collecting on every hand the weapons of hoſtility and inſtruments of death? I do not blame your ardor in preparing for the reſolute defence of your temporal rights. But conſider I beſeech you, the truly infinite importance of the ſalvation of your ſouls. Is it of much moment whether you and your children ſhall be rich or poor, at liberty or in bonds? Is it of much moment whether this beautiful country ſhall increaſe in fruitfulneſs from year to year, being cultivated by active induſtry, and

* Leſt this ſhould be thought a temporiſing compliment to the people of New-England, who have been the firſt ſufferers in the preſent conteſt, and have ſet ſo noble an example of invincible fortitude, in withſtanding the violence of oppreſſion, I think it proper to obſerve that the whole paragraph is copied from a ſermon on Pſal. lxxiv. 22. prepared and preached in Scotland, in the month of Auguſt, 1758.

poſſeſſed by independent freemen, or the ſcanty produce of the neglected fields ſhall be eaten up by hungry publicans, while the timid owner trembles at the tax gatherers approach? And is it of leſs moment my brethren, whether you ſhall be the heirs of glory or the heirs of hell? Is your ſtate on earth for a few fleeting years of ſo much moment? And is it of leſs moment, what ſhall be your ſtate through endleſs ages? Have you aſſembled together willingly to hear what ſhall be ſaid on public affairs, and to join in imploring the bleſſing of God on the counſels and arms of the united colonies, and can you be unconcerned, what ſhall become of you for ever, when all the monuments of human greatneſs ſhall be laid in aſhes, for "the earth *itself* and all the works that are therein ſhall "be burnt up."

Wherefore by beloved hearers, as the miniſtry of reconciliation is committed to me, I beſeech you in the moſt earneſt manner, to attend to "the things that belong to "your peace, before they are hid from your eyes." How ſoon and in what manner a ſeal ſhall be ſet upon the character and ſtate of every perſon here preſent, it is impoſſible to know; for he who only can know does not think proper to reveal it. But you may reſt aſſured that there is no time more ſuitable, and there is none ſo ſafe, as that which is preſent, ſince it is wholly uncertain whether any other ſhall be your's. Thoſe who ſhall firſt fall in battle, have not many more warnings to receive. There are ſome few daring and hardened ſinners who deſpiſe eternity itſelf, and ſet their Maker at defiance, but the far greater number by ſtaving off their convictions to a more convenient ſeaſon, have been taken unprepared, and thus eternally loſt. I would therefore earneſtly preſs the apoſtles exhortation, 2 Cor. vi. 1, 2. "We then, as workers "together with him, beſeech you alſo, that ye receive not "the grace of God in vain: For he ſaith, I have heard "thee in a time accepted, and in the day of ſalvation have "I ſuccoured thee: Behold, now is the accepted time; "behold, now is the day of ſalvation."

Suffer me to beſeech you, or rather to give you warning, not to reſt ſatisfied with a form of godlineſs, denying the

power thereof. There can be no true religion, till there be a discovery of your lost state by nature and practice, and an unfeigned acceptance of Christ Jesus, as he is offered in the gospel. Unhappy they who either despise his mercy, or are ashamed of his cross! Believe it, "there is no "salvation in any other. There is no other name under "heaven given amongst men by which we must be saved." Unless you are united to him by a lively faith, not the resentment of a haughty monarch, but the sword of divine justice hangs over you, and the fulness of divine vengeance shall speedily overtake you. I do not speak this only to the heaven, daring profligate, or grovelling sensualist, but to every insensible secure sinner; to all those, however decent and orderly in their civil deportment, who live to themselves and have their part and portion in this life; in fine to all who are yet in a state of nature, for "except a man be born again, he cannot see the "kingdom of God." The fear of man may make you hide your profanity: prudence and experience may make you abhor intemperance and riot; as you advance in life, one vice may supplant another and hold its place; but nothing less than the sovereign grace of God can produce a saving change of heart and temper, or fit you for his immediate presence.

2. From what has been said upon this subject, you may see what ground there is to give praise to God for his favors already bestowed on us, respecting the public cause. It would be a criminal inattention not to observe the singular interposition of Providence hitherto, in behalf of the American colonies. It is however impossible for me, in a single discourse, as well as improper at this time, to go through every step of our past transactions, I must therefore content myself with a few remarks. How many discoveries have been made of the designs of enemies in Britain and among ourselves, in a manner as unexpected to us as to them, and in such season as to prevent their effect? What surprising success has attended our encounters in almost every instance? Has not the boasted discipline of regular and veteran soldiers been turned into confusion and dismay, before the new and maiden courage of freemen, in

defence of their property and right? In what great mercy has blood been ſpared on the ſide of this injured country? Some important victories in the ſouth have been gained with ſo little loſs, that enemies will probably think it has been diſſembled; as many, even of ourſelves thought, till time rendered it undeniable. But theſe were comparatively of ſmall moment. The ſignal advantage we have gained by the evacuation of Boſton, and the ſhameful flight of the army and navy of Britain, was brought about without the loſs of a man. To all this we may add, that the counſels of our enemies have been viſibly confounded, ſo that I believe I may ſay with truth, that there is hardly any ſtep which they have taken, but it has operated ſtrongly againſt themſelves, and been more in our favor, than if they had followed a contrary courſe.

While we give praiſe to God the ſupreme diſpoſer of all events, for his interpoſition in our behalf, let us guard againſt the dangerous error of truſting in, or boaſting of an arm of fleſh. I could earneſtly wiſh, that while our arms are crowned with ſucceſs, we might content ourſelves with a modeſt aſcription of it to the power of the Higheſt. It has given me great uneaſineſs to read ſome oſtentatious, vaunting expreſſions in our news-papers, though happily I think, much reſtrained of late. Let us not return to them again. If I am not miſtaken, not only the holy ſcriptures in general, and the truths of the glorious goſpel in particular, but the whole courſe of providence, ſeem intended to abaſe the pride of man, and lay the vain-glorious in the duſt. How many inſtances does hiſtory furniſh us with, of thoſe who after exulting over, and deſpiſing their enemies, were ſignally and ſhamefully defeated.* The truth is, I believe, the remark may be applied univerſally, and we may ſay, that through the whole frame of nature, and the whole ſyſtem of human life, that which promiſes moſt, performs the leaſt. The flowers of fineſt colour ſeldom have the ſweeteſt fragrance. The

* There is no ſtory better known in Britiſh hiſtory, than that the officers of the French army the night preceding the battle of Agincourt, played at dice for Engliſh priſoners before they took them, and the next day were taken by them.

trees of quickeſt groweth or faireſt form, are ſeldom of the greateſt value or duration. Deep waters move with leaſt noiſe. Men who think moſt are ſeldom talkative. And I think it holds as much in war as in any thing, that every boaſter is a coward.

Pardon me, my brethren, for inſiſting ſo much upon this, which may ſeem but an immaterial circumſtance. It is in my opinion of very great moment. I look upon oſtentation and confidence to be a ſort of outrage upon Providence, and when it becomes general, and infuſes itſelf into the ſpirit of a people, it is a forerunner of deſtruction. How does Goliah the champion armed in a moſt formidable manner, expreſs his diſdain of David the ſtripling with his ſling and his ſtone, 1 Sam. xvii.42,43,44,45. "And when the Philiſtine looked about and ſaw David, "he diſdained him: for he was but a youth, and ruddy, "and of a fair countenance. And the Philiſtine ſaid unto "David, Am I a dog, that thou comeſt to me with ſtaves? "And the Philiſtine curſed David by his gods, and the "Philiſtine ſaid to David, come to me, and I will give "thy fleſh unto the fowls of the air, and to the beaſts of "the field." But how juſt and modeſt the reply? Then "ſaid David to the Philiſtine, thou comeſt to me with a "ſword and with a ſpear, and with a ſhield, but I come "unto thee in the name of the Lord of hoſts, the God of "the armies of Iſrael, whom thou haſt defied." I was well pleaſed with a remark of this kind thirty years ago in a pamphlet,* in which it was obſerved, that there was a great deal of profane oſtentation in the names given to ſhips of war, as the Victory, the Valient, the Thunderer, the Dreadnought, the Terrible, the Firebrand, the Furnace, the Lightning, the Infernal, and many more of the ſame kind. This the author conſidered as a ſymptom of the national character and manners very unfavorable, and not likely to obtain the bleſſing of the God of Heaven.†

* Britain's Remembrancer.

† I am ſenſible that one or two of theſe were ſhips taken from the French, which brought their names with them. But the greateſt number had their names impoſed in England, and I

3. From what has been ſaid you may learn what encouragement you have to put your truſt in God, and hope for his aſſiſtance in the preſent important conflict. He is the Lord of hoſts, great in might, and ſtrong in battle. Whoever hath his countenance and approbation, ſhall have the beſt at laſt. I do not mean to ſpeak prophetically, but agreeably to the analogy of faith, and the principles of God's moral government. Some have obſerved that true religion, and in her train, dominion, riches, literature, and arts, have taken their courſe in a ſlow and gradual manner, from eaſt to weſt, ſince the earth was ſettled after the flood, and from thence forebode the future glory of America. I leave this as a matter rather of conjecture than certainty, but obſerve, that if your cauſe is juſt,—if your principles are pure,—and if your conduct is prudent, you need not fear the multitude of oppoſing hoſts.

If your cauſe is juſt—you may look with confidence to the Lord and intreat him to plead it as his own. You are all my witneſſes, that this is the firſt time of my introducing any political ſubject into the pulpit. At this ſeaſon however, it is not only lawful but neceſſary, and I willingly embrace the opportunity of declaring my opinion without any heſitation, that the cauſe in which America is now in arms, is the cauſe of juſtice, of liberty, and of human nature. So far as we have hitherto proceeded, I am ſatisfied that the confederacy of the colonies, has not been the effect of pride, reſentment, or ſedition, but of a deep and general conviction, that our civil and religious liberties, and conſequently in a great meaſure the tempo-

cannot help obſerving, that the Victory, often celebrated as the fineſt ſhip ever built in Britain, was loſt in the night without a ſtorm, by ſome unknown accident, and about twelve hundred perſons, many of them of the firſt families in the nation, were buried with it in the deep. I do not mean to infer any thing from this, but, that we ought to live under the practical perſuaſion of what no man will doctrinally deny, that there is no warring with the elements, or him who directs their force; that he is able to write diſappointment on the wiſeſt human ſchemes, and by the word of his power to fruſtrate the efforts of the greateſt monarch upon earth.

ral and eternal happineſs of us and our poſterity, depended on the iſſue. The knowledge of God and his truths have from the beginning of the world been chiefly, if not entirely, confined to thoſe parts of the earth, where ſome degree of liberty and political juſtice were to be ſeen, and great were the difficulties with which they had to ſtruggle from the imperfection of human ſociety, and the unjuſt deciſions of uſurped authority. There is not a ſingle inſtance in hiſtory in which civil liberty was loſt, and religious liberty preſerved entire. If therefore we yield up our temporal property, we at the ſame time deliver the conſcience into bondage.

You ſhall not, my brethren, hear from me in the pulpit, what you have never heard from me in converſation, I mean railing at the king perſonally, or even his miniſters and the parliament, and people of Britain, as ſo many barbarous ſavages. Many of their actions have probably been worſe than their intentions. That they ſhould deſire unlimited dominion, if they can obtain or preſerve it, is neither new nor wonderful. I do not refuſe ſubmiſſion to their unjuſt claims, becauſe they are corrupt or profligate, although probably many of them are ſo, but becauſe they are men, and therefore liable to all the ſelfiſh bias inſeparable from human nature. I call this claim unjuſt, of making laws to bind us in all caſes whatſoever, becauſe they are ſeparated from us, independent of us, and have an intereſt in oppoſing us. Would any man who could prevent it, give up his eſtate, perſon, and family, to the diſpoſal of his neighbour, although he had liberty to chuſe the wiſeſt and the beſt maſter? Surely not. This is the true and proper hinge of the controverſy between Great-Britain and America. It is however to be added, that ſuch is their diſtance from us, that a wiſe and prudent adminiſtration of our affairs is as impoſſible as the claim of authority is unjuſt. Such is and muſt be their ignorance of the ſtate of things here, ſo much time muſt elapſe before an error can be ſeen and remedied, and ſo much injuſtice and partiality muſt be expected from the arts and miſrepreſentation of intereſted perſons, that for theſe colonies to depend wholly upon the

legiſlature of Great-Britain, would be like many other oppreſſive connexions, injury to the maſter, and ruin to the ſlave.

The management of the war itſelf on their part, would furniſh new proof of this, if any were needful. Is it not manifeſt with what abſurdity and impropriety they have conducted their own deſigns? We had nothing ſo much to fear as diſſenſion, and they have by wanton and unneceſſary cruelty forced us into union. At the ſame time to let us ſee what we have to expect, and what would be the fatal conſequence of unlimited ſubmiſſion, they have uniformly called thoſe acts *Lenity*, which filled this whole continent with reſentment and horror. The ineffable diſdain expreſſed by our fellow ſubject, in ſaying, 'That 'he would not harken to America, till ſhe was at his 'feet,' has armed more men, and inſpired more deadly rage, than could have been done by laying waſte a whole province with fire and ſword. Again we wanted not numbers, but time, and they ſent over handful after handful till we were ready to oppoſe a multitude greater than they have to ſend. In fine, if there was one place ſtronger than the reſt, and more able and willing to reſiſt, there they made the attack, and left the others till they were duly informed, completely incenſed, and fully furniſhed with every inſtrument of war.

I mention theſe things, my brethren, not only as grounds of confidence in God, who can eaſily overthrow the wiſdom of the wiſe, but as deciſive proofs of the impoſſibility of theſe great and growing ſtates, being ſafe and happy when every part of their internal polity is dependant on Great Britian. If, on account of their diſtance, and ignorance of our ſituation, they could not conduct their own quarrel with propriety for one year, how can they give direction and vigor to every department of our civil conſtitutions from age to age? There are fixed bounds to every human thing. When the branches of a tree grow very large and weighty, they fall off from the trunk. The ſharpeſt ſword will not pierce when it cannot reach. And there is a certain diſtance from the ſeat of government, where an attempt to rule will either produce tyranny

and helpleſs ſubjection, or provoke reſiſtance and effect a ſeparation.

I have ſaid, if your principles are pure—The meaning of this is, if your preſent oppoſition to the claims of the Britiſh miniſtry does not ariſe from a ſeditious and turbulent ſpirit, or a wanton contempt of legal authority; from a blind and factious attachment to particular perſons or parties; or from a ſelfiſh rapacious diſpoſition, and a deſire to turn public confuſion to private profit—but from a concern for the intereſt of your country, and the ſafety of yourſelves and your poſterity. On this ſubject I cannot help obſerving, that though it would be a miracle if there were not many ſelfiſh perſons among us, and diſcoveries now and then made of mean and intereſted tranſactions, yet they have been comparatively inconſiderable both in number and effect. In general, there has been ſo great a degree of public ſpirit, that we have much more reaſon to be thankful for its vigor and prevalence, than to wonder at the few appearances of diſhoneſty or diſaffection. It would be very uncandid to aſcribe the univerſal ardor that has prevailed among all ranks of men, and the ſpirited exertions in the moſt diſtant colonies, to any thing elſe than public ſpirit. Nor was there ever perhaps in hiſtory ſo general a commotion from which religious differences have been ſo entirely excluded. Nothing of this kind has as yet been heard, except of late in the abſurd, but malicious and deteſtable attempts of our few remaining enemies to introduce them. At the ſame time I muſt alſo, for the honor of this country obſerve, that though government in the ancient forms has been ſo long unhinged, and in ſome colonies not ſufficient care taken to ſubſtitute another in its place; yet has there been, by common conſent, a much greater degree of order and public peace, than men of reflection and experience foretold or expected. From all theſe circumſtances I conclude favorably of the principles of the friends of liberty, and do earneſtly exhort you to adopt and act upon thoſe which have been deſcribed, and reſiſt the influence of every other.

Once more, if to the juſtice of your cauſe, and the purity of your principles, you add prudence in your conduct,

there will be the greateſt reaſon to hope, by the bleſſing of God, for proſperity and ſucceſs. By prudence in conducting this important ſtruggle, I have chiefly in view union, firmneſs, and patience. Every body muſt perceive the abſolute neceſſity of union. It is indeed in every body's mouth, and therefore inſtead of attempting to convince you of its importance, I will only caution you againſt the uſual cauſes of diviſion. If perſons of every rank, inſtead of implicitly complying with the orders of thoſe whom they themſelves have choſen to direct, will needs judge every meaſure over again, when it comes to be put in execution; if different claſſes of men intermix their little private views, or claſhing intereſt with public affairs, and marſhal into parties, the merchant againſt the landholder, and the landholder againſt the merchant; if local provincial pride and jealouſy ariſe, and you allow yourſelves to ſpeak with contempt of the courage, character, manners, or even language of particular places, you are doing a greater injury to the common cauſe, than you are aware of. If ſuch practices are admitted among us, I ſhall look upon it as one of the moſt dangerous ſymptoms, and if they become general, a preſage of approaching ruin.

By firmneſs and patience, I mean a reſolute adherence to your duty, and laying your account with many difficulties, as well as occaſional diſappointments. In a former part of this diſcourſe, I have cautioned you againſt oſtentation and vain glory. Be pleaſed farther to obſerve that extremes often beget one another, the ſame perſons who exult extravagantly on ſucceſs, are generally moſt liable to deſpondent timidity on every little inconſiderable defeat. Men of this character are the bane and corruption of every ſociety or party to which they belong, but they are eſpecially the ruin of an army, if ſuffered to continue in it. Remember the viciſſitude of human things, and the uſual courſe of providence. How often has a juſt cauſe been reduced to the loweſt ebb, and yet when firmly adhered to, has become finally triumphant. I ſpeak this now while the affairs of the colonies are in ſo proſperous a ſtate, leſt this propriety itſelf ſhould render

you leſs able to bear unexpected misfortunes—The ſum of the whole is, that the bleſſing of God is only to be looked for by thoſe who are not wanting in the diſcharge of their own duty. I would neither have you to truſt in an arm of fleſh, nor ſit with folded hands and expect that miracles ſhould be wrought in your defence—This is a ſin which is in Scripture ſtiled tempting God. In oppoſition to it, I would exhort you as Joab did the hoſt of Iſrael, who, though he does not appear to have had a ſpotleſs character throughout, certainly in this inſtance ſpoke like a prudent general and a pious man. 2 Sam. x. 12. "Be of good courage, and let us behave ourſelves valiantly for our people and for the cities of our God, and let "the Lord do that which is good in his ſight."

I ſhall now conclude this diſcourſe by ſome exhortations to duty, founded upon the truths which have been illuſtrated above, and ſuited to the intereſting ſtate of this country at the preſent time; and,

1. Suffer me to recommend to you an attention to the public intereſt of religion, or in other words, zeal for the glory of God and the good of others. I have already endeavored to exhort ſinners to repentance; what I have here in view is to point out to you the concern which every good man ought to take in the national character and manners, and the means which he ought to uſe for promoting public virtue, and bearing down impiety and vice. This is a matter of the utmoſt moment, and which ought to be well underſtood, both in its nature and principles. Nothing is more certain than that a general profligacy and corruption of manners make a people ripe for deſtruction. A good form of government may hold the rotten materials together for ſome time, but beyond a certain pitch, even the beſt conſtitution will be ineffectual, and ſlavery muſt enſue. On the other hand, when the manners of a nation are pure, when true religion and internal principles maintain their vigour, the attempts of the moſt powerful enemies to oppreſs them are commonly baffled and diſappointed. This will be found equally certain, whether we conſider the great principles of God's

moral government, or the operation and influence of natural cauſes.

What follows from this? That he is the beſt friend to American liberty, who is moſt ſincere and active in promoting true and undefiled religion, and who ſets himſelf with the greateſt firmneſs to bear down profanity and immorality of every kind. Whoever is an avowed enemy to God, I ſcruple not to call him an enemy to his country. Do not ſuppoſe, my brethren, that I mean to recommend a furious and angry zeal for the circumſtantials of religion, or the contentions of one ſect with another about their peculiar diſtinctions. I do not wiſh you to oppoſe any body's religion, but every body's wickedneſs. Perhaps there are few ſurer marks of the reality of religion, than when a man feels himſelf more joined in ſpirit to a true holy perſon of a different denomination, than to an irregular liver of his own. It is therefore your duty in this important and critical ſeaſon to exert yourſelves, every one in his proper ſphere, to ſtem the tide of prevailing vice, to promote the knowledge of God, the reverence of his name and worſhip, and obedience to his laws.

Perhaps you will aſk, what it is that you are called to do for this purpoſe farther than your own perſonal duty? I anſwer this itſelf when taken in its proper extent is not a little. The nature and obligation of viſible religion is, I am afraid, little underſtood and leſs attended to.

Many from a real or pretended fear of the imputation of hypocriſy, baniſh from their converſation and carriage every appearance of reſpect and ſubmiſſion to the living God. What a weakneſs and meanneſs of ſpirit does it diſcover, for a man to be aſhamed in the preſence of his fellow ſinners, to profeſs that reverence to almighty God which he inwardly feels: The truth is, he makes himſelf truly liable to the accuſation which he means to avoid. It is as genuine and perhaps a more culpable hypocriſy to appear to have leſs religion than you really have, than to appear to have more. This falſe ſhame is a more extenſive evil than is commonly apprehended. We contribute conſtantly, though inſenſibly, to form each others character and manners; and therefore, the uſefulneſs of a ſtrictly

holy and conſcientious deportment is not confined to the poſſeſſor, but ſpreads its happy influence to all that are within its reach. I need ſcarcely add, that in proportion as men are diſtinguiſhed by underſtanding, literature, age, rank, office, wealth, or any other circumſtance, their example will be uſeful on the one hand, or pernicious on the other.

But I cannot content myſelf with barely recommending a ſilent example. There is a dignity in virtue which is entitled to authority, and ought to claim it. In many caſes it is the duty of a good man, by open reproof and oppoſition, to wage war with profaneneſs. There is a ſcripture precept delivered in very ſingular terms, to which I beg your attention; "Thou ſhalt not hate thy "brother in thy heart, but ſhalt in any wiſe rebuke him, "and not ſuffer ſin upon him." How prone are many to repreſent reproof as flowing from ill nature and ſurlineſs of temper? The Spirit of God, on the contrary, conſiders it as the effect of inward hatred, or want of genuine love, to forbear reproof, when it is neceſſary or may be uſeful. I am ſenſible there may in ſome caſes be a reſtraint from prudence, agreeably to that caution of our Saviour, "Caſt not your pearls before ſwine, leſt they "trample them under their feet, and turn again and rent "you." Of this every man muſt judge as well as he can for himſelf; but certainly, either by open reproof, or expreſſive ſilence, or ſpeedy departure from ſuch ſociety, we ought to guard againſt being partakers of other men's ſins.

To this let me add, that if all men are bound in ſome degree, certain claſſes of men are under peculiar obligations, to the diſcharge of this duty. Magiſtrates, miniſters, parents, heads of families, and thoſe whom age has rendered venerable, are called to uſe their authority and influence for the glory of God and the good of others. Bad men themſelves diſcover an inward conviction of this, for they are often liberal in their reproaches of perſons of grave characters or religious profeſſion, if they bear with patience the profanity of others. Inſtead of enlarging on the duty of men in authority in general, I muſt parti-

cularly recommend this matter to thoſe who have the command of ſoldiers inliſted for the defence of their country. The cauſe is ſacred, and the champions for it ought to be holy. Nothing is more grieving to the heart of a good man, than to hear from thoſe who are going to the field, the horrid ſound of curſing and blaſphemy; it cools the ardor of his prayers, as well as abates his confidence and hope in God. Many more circumſtances affect me in ſuch a caſe, than I can enlarge upon, or indeed eaſily enumerate at preſent; the glory of God, the intereſt of the deluded ſinner, going like a devoted victim, and imprecating vengeance on his own head, as well as the cauſe itſelf committed to his care. We have ſometimes taken the liberty to forebode the downfall of the Britiſh empire, from the corruption and degeneracy of the people. Unhappily the Britiſh ſoldiers have been diſtinguiſhed among all the nations in Europe, for the moſt ſhocking profanity. Shall we then pretend to emulate them in this infernal diſtinction, or rob them of the horrid privilege? God forbid. Let the officers of the army in every degree remember, that as military ſubjection, while it laſts, is the moſt complete of any, it is in their power greatly to reſtrain, if not wholly to baniſh, this flagrant enormity.

2. I exhort all who are not called to go into the field, to apply themſelves with the utmoſt diligence to works of induſtry. It is in your power by this mean not only to ſupply the neceſſities, but to add to the ſtrength of your country. Habits of induſtry prevailing in a ſociety, not only increaſe its wealth, as their immediate effect, but they prevent the introduction of many vices, and are intimately connected with ſobriety and good morals. Idleneſs is the mother or nurſe of almoſt every vice; and want, which is its inſeparable companion, urges men on to the moſt abandoned and deſtructive courſes. Induſtry, therefore is a moral duty of the greateſt moment, abſolutely neceſſary to national proſperity, and the ſure way of obtaining the bleſſing of God. I would alſo obſerve, that in this, as in every other part of God's government, obedience to his will is as much a natural mean, as a meritorious cauſe, of the advantage we wiſh to reap from it. In-

duſtry brings up a firm and hardy race. He who is inured to the labor of the field, is prepared for the fatigues of a campaign. The active farmer who riſes with the dawn and follows his team or plow, muſt in the end be an overmatch for thoſe effeminate and delicate ſoldiers, who are nurſed in the lap of ſelf-indulgence, and whoſe greateſt exertion is in the important preparation for, and tedious attendance on, a maſquerade, or midnight ball.

3. In the laſt place, ſuffer me to recommend to you frugality in your families, and every other article of expence. This the ſtate of things among us renders abſolutely neceſſary, and it ſtands in the moſt immediate connexion both with virtuous induſtry, and active public ſpirit. Temperance in meals, moderation and decency in dreſs, furniture and equipage, have, I think, generally been characteriſtics of a diſtinguiſhed patriot. And when the ſame ſpirit pervades a people in general, they are fit for every duty, and able to encounter the moſt formidable enemy. The general ſubject of the preceding diſcourſe has been the wrath of man praiſing God. If the unjuſt oppreſſion of your enemies, which withholds from you many of the uſual articles of luxury and magnificence, ſhall contribute to make you clothe yourſelves and your children with the works of your own hands, and cover your tables with the ſalutary productions of your own ſoil, it will be a new illuſtration of the ſame truth, and a real happineſs to yourſelves and your country.

I could wiſh to have every good thing done from the pureſt principles and the nobleſt views. Conſider, therefore, that the Chriſtian character, particularly the ſelf-denial of the goſpel, ſhould extend to your whole deportment. In the early times of Chriſtianity, when adult converts were admitted to baptiſm, they were aſked among other queſtions, Do you renounce the world, its ſhews, its pomp, and its vanities? I do. The form of this is ſtill preſerved in the adminiſtration of baptiſm, where we renounce the devil, the world, and the fleſh. This certainly implies not only abſtaining from acts of groſs intemperance and exceſs, but a humility of carriage, a reſtraint and moderation in all your deſires. The ſame thing, as

it is ſuitable to your Chriſtian profeſſion, is alſo neceſſary to make you truly independent in yourſelves, and to feed the ſource of liberality and charity to others, or to the public. The riotous and waſteful liver, whoſe craving appetites make him conſtantly needy, is and muſt be ſubject to many maſters, according to the ſaying of Solomon, "The borrower is ſervant to the lender." But the frugal and moderate perſon, who guides his affairs with diſcretion, is able to aſſiſt in public counſels by a free and unbiaſſed judgment, to ſupply the wants of his poor brethren, and ſometimes, by his eſtate and ſubſtance to give important aid to a ſinking country.

Upon the whole, I beſeech you to make a wiſe improvement of the preſent threatening aſpect of public affairs, and to remember that your duty to God, to your country, to your families, and to yourſelves, is the ſame. True religion is nothing elſe but an inward temper and outward conduct ſuited to your ſtate and circumſtances in providence at any time. And as peace with God and conformity to him, adds to the ſweetneſs of created comforts while we poſſeſs them, ſo in times of difficulty and trial, it is in the man of piety and inward principle, that we may expect to find the uncorrupted patriot, the uſeful citizen, and the invincible ſoldier.—God grant that in America true religion and civil liberty may be inſeparable, and that the unjuſt attempts to deſtroy the one, may in the iſſue tend to the ſupport and eſtabliſhment of both.

ADDRESS

TO THE

NATIVES OF SCOTLAND RESIDING IN AMERICA.

Countrymen and Friends,

AS ſoon as I had conſented to the publication of the foregoing ſermon, I felt an irreſiſtible deſire to accompany it with a few words addreſſed to you in particular. I am certain I feel the attachment of country as far as it is a virtuous or laudable principle, perhaps it would be nearer the truth to ſay, as far as it is a natural and pardonable prejudice. He who is ſo pleaſed may attribute it to this laſt when I ſay, that I have never ſeen cauſe to be aſhamed of the place of my birth; that ſince the revival of arts and letters in Europe in the cloſe of the fourteenth and beginning of the fifteenth century, the natives of Scotland have not been inferior to thoſe of any other country, for genius, erudition, military proweſs, or any of thoſe accompliſhments which improve or embelliſh human nature. When to this it is added, that ſince my coming to America at an advanced period of life, the friendſhip of my countrymen has been as much above my expectation as deſert, I hope every reader will conſider what is now to be offered as the effect not only of unfeigned good will, but of the moſt ardent affection.

It has given me no little uneaſineſs to hear the word *Scotch* uſed as a term of reproach in the American controverſy, which could only be upon the ſuppoſition that ſtrangers of that country are more univerſally oppoſed to the liberties of America than thoſe who were born in South-

Britain, or in Ireland. I am ſenſible that this has been done in ſome news-papers and contemptible anonymous publications, in a manner that was neither warranted by truth, nor dictated by prudence. There are many natives of Scotland in this country, whoſe oppoſition to the unjuſt claims of Great-Britain has been as early and uniform, founded upon as rational and liberal principles, and therefore likely to be as laſting, as that of any ſet of men whatever. As to Great-Britain itſelf, time has now fully diſcovered, that the real friends of America in any part of that kingdom were very few, and thoſe whoſe friendſhip was diſintereſted, and in no degree owing to their own political factions, ſtill fewer. The wiſe and valuable part of the nation were, and as yet are, in a great meaſure ignorant of the ſtate of things in this country; neither is it eaſy for the bulk of a people to ſhake off their prejudices, and open their eyes upon the great principles of univerſal liberty. It is therefore at leaſt very diſputable, whether there is any juſt ground for the diſtinction between Scots and Engliſh on this ſubject at all.

This diſpute, however, I do not mean to enter upon, becauſe it is of too little moment to find a place here; but ſuppoſing that, in ſome provinces eſpecially, the natives of Scotland have been too much inclined to ſupport the uſurpations of the parent ſtate, I will firſt endeavour to account for it, by aſſigning ſome of its probable cauſes; and then offer a few conſiderations which ſhould induce them to wipe off the aſperſion entirely, by a contrary conduct.

As to the firſt of theſe, I will mention what I ſuppoſe to have been the firſt and radical cauſe, and which gave birth to every other, of the diſaffection of ſome of the natives of Scotland to the juſt privileges of America. What I have in view was the friends of liberty in many places of America, taking the part of, and ſeeming to conſider themſelves as in a great meaſure engaged in the ſame cauſe with, that very diſtinguiſhed perſon, John Wilkes Eſq. of London. This was done not only in many writings and news-paper diſſertations, but one or two colonies, in ſome of their moſt reſpectable meetings, manifeſted their

attachment to him, and ſeemed to conſider him as their patron and friend. No. 45, which was the moſt offenſive number of a worthleſs paper, was repeated and echoed, by the moſt ſilly and ridiculous alluſions to it, through every part of the country, and by many who could not tell what was ſignified by the term.

It will not be neceſſary to ſay much on the prudence of ſuch conduct, becauſe I ſuppoſe thoſe who expected Wilkes's mob would pull down the parliament-houſe, or that there would be inſurrections all over the kingdom in behalf of America, are by this time fully ſatisfied of their miſtake. It appears now in the cleareſt manner, that, till very lately, thoſe who ſeemed to take the part of America in the Britiſh Parliament, never did it on American principles. They either did not underſtand, or were not willing to admit, the extent of our claim. Even the great Lord Chatham's bill for reconciliation would not have been accepted here, and did not materially differ from what the miniſtry would have conſented to. The truth is, the far greateſt part of the countenance given in Britain to the complaints of this country, was by thoſe who had no other intention in it than to uſe them as an engine of oppoſition to the miniſtry for the time being. It is true, ſome of them have now learned to reaſon very juſtly, and upon the moſt liberal principles; but their number is not great, and it was not the caſe with any one ſpeaker or writer, whoſe works I have had the opportunity of peruſing, till the very laſt ſtage of the quarrel.

What effect this Wilkiſm (if I may ſpeak ſo) of many Americans, may be ſuppoſed to have had upon the minds of gentlemen from Scotland, it is not difficult to explain. That gentleman and his aſſociates thought proper to found the whole of their oppoſition to the then miniſtry, upon a contempt and hatred of the Scots nation; and by the moſt illiberal methods, and the moſt ſcandalous falſehoods, to ſtir up a national jealouſy between the northern and ſouthern parts of the iſland. There was not a vile term or hateful idea, which ancient vulgar animoſity had ever uſed, though long union had made them ſcarcely intelligible, which he did not rake up and attempt to bring into cre-

dit, by writing and converſation. The conſequence of this is well known. Wilkes and ſome others were burnt in effigy in Scotland, and it produced ſo general an attachment to the king and miniſtry, as has not yet ſpent its force. In theſe circumſtances is it to be wondered at, that many who left Scotland within the laſt fifteen years, when they heard Wilkes and thoſe who adhered to him, extolled and celebrated by the ſons of liberty, ſhould be apt to conſider it as an evidence of the ſame ſpirit, and that they were engaged in ſupport of the ſame cauſe. Perhaps we may go a little higher with this remark in tracing political appearances to their ſource. It is generally ſaid that the King himſelf has diſcovered a violent rancorous perſonal hatred againſt the Americans. If this be true, and I know nothing to the contrary, it may be eaſily accounted for upon the very ſame principles.

I am far from ſuppoſing that this was a good reaſon for any man's being cool to the American cauſe, which was as different from that of Wilkes, as light is from darkneſs. It was indeed doing great diſhonor to the noble ſtruggle, to ſuppoſe it to have any connexion with who ſhould be in or out of court-favor at London; and therefore it was always my opinion, that thoſe who railed againſt the king and miniſtry only, did not carry the argument home, nor fully underſtand the nature of their own plea. In order to juſtify the American oppoſition, it is not neceſſary to ſhew that the perſons in power have invaded liberty in Britain; it is ſufficient to ſay that they, with the concurrence of the whole nation, have refuſed to ſuffer it to continue in the colonies.—This leads me to the ſecond part of my deſign, which was to lay before you the reaſons which, I think, ſhould induce every lover of juſtice and of mankind, not only to be a well-wiſher, but a firm and ſtedfaſt friend to America, in this important conteſt.

It has been often ſaid, that the preſent is likely to be an important æra to America. I think we may ſay much more; it is likely to be an important æra in the hiſtory of mankind. In the ancient migrations, a new country was generally ſettled by a ſmall unconnected, and often an ig-

norant band. The people and the ſoil were alike uncultivated, and therefore they proceeded to improvement by very ſlow degrees; nay, many of them fell back and degenerated into a ſtate vaſtly more ſavage than the people from whence they came. In America we ſee a rich and valuable ſoil and an extenſive country, taken poſſeſſion of by the power, the learning, and the wealth of Europe. For this reaſon it is now exhibiting to the world a ſcene which was never ſeen before. It has had a progreſs in improvement and population ſo rapid as no political calculators have been able to aſcertain. I look upon every thing that has been ſaid upon this ſubject to be mere conjecture, except in ſuch places as there has been an actual numeration. When men ſay that America doubles its number in fifteen, twenty, or twenty-five years, they ſpeak by gueſs, and they ſay nothing. In ſome places that may be under or over the truth; but there are vaſt tracts of land that fill every year with inhabitants, and yet the old ſettled places ſtill continue to increaſe.

It is proper to obſerve that the Britiſh ſettlements have been improved in a proportion far beyond the ſettlements of other European nations. To what can this be aſcribed? Not to the climate; for they are of all climates: Not to the people; for they are a mixture of all nations. It muſt therefore be reſolved ſingly into the degree of Britiſh liberty which they brought from home, and which pervaded more or leſs their ſeveral conſtitutions. It has been repeated to us, I know not how often, by the mercenary ſhort-ſighted writers in favor of ſubmiſſion to, or reunion with, Great-Britain, that we have thriven very much in paſt times by our dependance on the mother country, and therefore we ſhould be loth to part. Theſe writers forget that the very complaint is, that ſhe will not ſuffer us to enjoy our ancient rights. Can any paſt experience ſhew that we ſhall thrive under new impoſitions? I ſhould be glad any ſuch reaſoners would attempt to prove that we have thriven by our dependance, and not by the degree of independence which we have hitherto enjoyed. If we have thriven by our dependance, I conceive it is a neceſſary conſequence that thoſe provinces muſt have

thriven moſt which have been moſt dependant. But the contrary is ſelf-evident. Thoſe which have hitherto enjoyed the freeſt form of government, though greatly inferior in ſoil and climate, have yet out-ſtripped the others in number of people and value of land, merely becauſe the laſt were more under the influence of appointments and authority from home.

When this is the undeniable ſtate of things, can any perſon of a liberal mind wiſh that theſe great and growing countries ſhould be brought back to a ſtate of ſubjection to a diſtant power? And can any man deny, that if they had yielded to the claims of the Britiſh parliament, they would have been no better than a parcel of tributary ſtates, ruled by lordly tyrants, and exhauſted by unfeeling penſioners, under the commiſſion of one too diſtant to hear the cry of oppreſſion, and ſurrounded by thoſe who had an intereſt in deceiving him. It ought therefore, in my opinion, to meet with the cordial approbation of every impartial perſon, as I am confident it will of poſterity, that they have united for common defence, and reſolved that they will be both free and independent, becauſe they cannot be the one without the other.

As this meaſure, long foreſeen, has now taken place, I ſhall beg leave to ſay a few things upon it; in which I mean to ſhow, 1. That it was neceſſary. 2. That it will be honorable and profitable. And 3. That, in all probability, it will be no injury, but a real advantage, to the iſland of Great-Britain.

1. It had become abſolutely neceſſary. All reconciliation, but upon the footing of abſolute unconditional ſubmiſſion, had been poſitively refuſed by Great-Britain; unleſs, therefore, the colonies had reſolved to continue in a looſe and broken ſtate, with the name of a government which they had taken arms to oppoſe, the ſtep which they have now taken could not have been avoided. Beſides, things had proceeded ſo far, and ſuch meaſures had been taken on both ſides, that it had become impoſſible to lay down a ſcheme by which *they* ſhould be ſure of our dependance, and *we*, at the ſame time, ſecured in our liberties. While things continued in their ancient ſtate, there was

perhaps a power on the part of each, of which they were hardly conſcious, or were afraid and unwilling to exert. But after the encroachments had been made and reſiſted, to expect any thing elſe than a continual attempt to extend authority on the one hand, and to guard againſt it on the other, is to diſcover very little knowledge of human nature. In ſuch a ſituation, though every claim of America ſhould be yielded, ſhe would ſoon be either in a ſtate of continual confuſion, or abſolute ſubmiſſion. The king of England, living in his Engliſh dominions, would not, and indeed durſt not, aſſent to any act of an American legiſlature, that was, or was ſuppoſed to be, hurtful to his Engliſh ſubjects. This is not founded on conjecture, but experience. There is not (at leaſt dean Swift affirms it) any dependance of Ireland upon England, except an act of the Iriſh parliament, that the king of England ſhall be king of Ireland. This laſt has a ſeparate independent legiſlature, and in every thing elſe but the above circumſtance ſeems to be perfectly free; yet if any man ſhould aſſert, that the one kingdom is not truly ſubject to the other, he would in my opinion know very little of the ſtate and hiſtory of either.

2. A ſtate of independency will be both honorable and profitable to this country. I paſs over many advantages in the way of commerce, as well as in other reſpects, that muſt neceſſarily accrue from it, that I may dwell a little on the great and leading benefit, which is the foundation of all the reſt. We ſhall have the opportunity of forming plans of government upon the moſt rational, juſt, and equal principles. I confeſs I have always looked upon this with a kind of enthuſiaſtic ſatisfaction. The caſe never happened before ſince the world began. All the governments we have read of in former ages were ſettled by caprice or accident, by the influence of prevailing parties, or particular perſons, or preſcribed by a conqueror. Important improvements indeed have been forced upon ſome conſtitutions by the ſpirit of daring men, ſupported by ſucceſsful inſurrections. But to ſee government in large and populous countries ſettled from its foundation, by deliberate counſel, and directed immediately to the public

good of the preſent and future generations, while the people are waiting for the deciſion with full confidence in the wiſdom and impartiality of thoſe to whom they have committed the important truſt, is certainly altogether new. We learn indeed from hiſtory, that ſmall tribes and feeble new ſettlements, did ſometimes employ one man of eminent wiſdom, to prepare a ſyſtem of laws for them. Even this was a wiſe meaſure, and attended with happy effects. But how vaſt the difference, when we have the experience of all paſt ages, the hiſtory of human ſociety, and the well known cauſes of proſperity and miſery in other governments, to aſſiſt us in the choice.

The proſpect of this happy circumſtance, and the poſſibility of loſing it, and ſuffering the ſeaſon to paſs over, has filled me with anxiety for ſome time. So far as we have hitherto proceeded, there has been great unanimity and public ſpirit. The inhabitants of every province, and perſons of all denominations, have vied with each other in zeal for the common intereſt. But was it not to be feared that ſome men would acquire over-bearing influence? that human weakneſs and human paſſions would diſcover themſelves, and prevent the finiſhing of what had been ſo happily begun. In the time of the civil wars in England, had they ſettled a regular form of government as ſoon as the parliament had obtained an evident ſuperiority, their liberties would never have been ſhaken, and the revolution would have been unneceſſary. But by delaying the thing too long, they were broken into parties, and bewildered in their views, and at laſt tamely ſubmitted without reſiſtance to that very tyranny againſt which they had fought with ſo much glory and ſucceſs. For this reaſon I think that every candid and liberal mind ought to rejoice in the meaſures lately taken through the States of America, and particularly the late declaration of independence, as it will not only give union and force to the meaſures of defence while they are neceſſary, but lay a foundation for the birth of millions, and the future improvement of a great part of the globe.

I have only further to obſerve, 3. That I am confident the independence of America will, in the end, be to the

real advantage of the iſland of Great Britain. Were this even otherwiſe, it would be a weak argument againſt the claim of juſtice. Why ſhould the ſecurity or proſperity of this vaſt country be ſacrificed to the ſuppoſed intereſt of an inconſiderable ſpot? But I cannot believe that the miſery and ſubjection of any country on earth, is neceſſary to the happineſs of another. Blind partiality and ſelf-intereſt may repreſent it in this light; but the opinion is deluſive, the ſuppoſition is falſe. The ſucceſs and increaſe of one nation is, or may be, a benefit to every other. It is ſeldom, indeed, that a people in general can receive and adopt theſe generous ſentiments, they are nevertheleſs perfectly juſt. It is induſtry only, and not poſſeſſions, that makes the ſtrength and wealth of a nation; and this is not hindered but encouraged, provoked, and rewarded by the induſtry of others.*

But to leave the general principle, or rather to apply it to the caſe of Great Britain and America: What profit has the former hitherto received from the latter? and what can it reaſonably expect for the future? Only its trade, and ſuch part of that trade as tends to encourage the induſtry and increaſe the number of the inhabitants of that iſland. It will be ſaid, they intend to raiſe a large, clear, net revenue upon us, by taxation. It has been ſhewn by many, that all the taxes which they could raiſe would only ſerve to feed the inſatiable deſire of wealth in placemen and penſioners, to increaſe the influence of the crown, and the corruption of the people. It was by the acquiſition of numerous provinces that Rome haſtened to its ruin. But even ſuppoſing it otherwiſe, and that without any bad conſequence among themſelves, they were to acquire a great addition to their yearly revenue, for every ſhilling they gained by taxes, they would loſe ten in the way of trade. For a trifling addition to the ſums of public money to be applied or waſted by miniſters of ſtate, they would loſe ten times the quantity diſtributed among uſeful manufacturers, the ſtrength and glory of a ſtate. I think this has been ſometimes compared to the difference

* See David Hume's Eſſay on the jealouſy of trade.

between draughts of ſpirituous liquors to intoxicate the head or weaken the ſtomach, and cool refreſhing food to give ſoundneſs, health and vigor to every member of the body.

The trade, then, of America, as ſoon as peace is ſettled, will be as open to them as ever. But it will be ſaid, they have now an excluſive trade, they will then but ſhare it with other nations. I anſwer, an excluſive trade is not eaſily preſerved, and when it is preſerved, the reſtriction is commonly more hurtful than uſeful. Trade is of a nice and delicate nature; it is founded upon intereſt. It will force its way wherever intereſt leads, and can hardly by any art be made to go in another direction. The Spaniards have an excluſive trade, as far as they pleaſe to confine it, to their own plantations. Do they reap much benefit from it? I believe not. Has it made their own people more induſtrious at home? Juſt the contrary. Does it, in the natural courſe of things, make a people leſs careful to work as well, and as cheap as others, to procure voluntary purchaſers, when they know they can ſend their goods to thoſe who are obliged to take them? Does it not both tempt and enable great merchants in the capital, to import from other nations what they can export to ſuch a forced market, to advantage? By this means a conſiderable profit may come into the coffers of a few particulars, while no eſſential ſervice is done to the people, and the ultimate profit is carried to that country where the goods are produced or fabricated. It has been repeatedly ſaid by political writers in England, that the balance of trade is againſt that country to every nation, excepting Portugal and their own plantations. I will not anſwer for the truth or univerſality of this aſſertion, but if it is true in any meaſure, I will venture to affirm upon the principles of general reaſon, that the cauſe which produces it, is no other than the excluſive trade they have hitherto enjoyed to the American ſettlements.

But the circumſtance which I apprehend will contribute moſt to the intereſt of Great Britain in American Independence is, its influence in peopling and enriching this great continent. It will certainly tend to make the

American States numerous, powerful, and opulent, to a degree not eaſily conceived. The great and penetrating Monteſquieu, in his Spirit of Laws, has ſhewn in the cleareſt manner, that nothing contributes ſo much to the proſperity of a people, as the ſtate of ſociety among them, and the form of their government. A free government overcomes every obſtacle, makes a deſart a fruitful field, and fills a bleak and barren country with all the conveniencies of life. If ſo, what muſt be the operation of this powerful cauſe upon countries enjoying in the higheſt degree every advantage that can be derived from ſituation, climate, and ſoil? If the trade of America has hitherto been of ſo great benefit to England, how much more valuable may it be when theſe countries ſhall be ſtill more highly improved, if ſhe ſhall continue to enjoy it? This argument is liable to no objection but what may ariſe from the loſs of an excluſive trade, which I have already conſidered. It may be added, however, that there is not now nor ever has been, any averſion in the Americans to the people of Great Britain, ſo that they may be ſure of our trade if they treat us as well as others, and if otherwiſe, they do not deſerve it.

I might illuſtrate the argument by ſtating the probable conſequences of a contrary ſuppoſition. If Great Britain ſhould prevail, or overcome the American States, and eſtabliſh viceroys with abſolute authority in every province; all men of ſpirit and lovers of freedom would certainly withdraw themſelves to a corner, if ſuch could be found, out of the reach of tyranny and oppreſſion. The numbers of the people at any rate would ſenſibly decreaſe, their wealth would be ſpeedily exhauſted, and there would remain only a nominal authority over a deſolate country, in return for a vaſt expence laid out in the conqueſt, and in place of a great and profitable trade, by which both nations were made happy. One of the arguments, if they may be called ſo, made uſe of againſt this country, and on which an obligation to obedience has been founded, is taken from the expence they have been at in blood and treaſure for our protection in former wars. This argument has been often anſwered in the fulleſt manner, but if they ſhall

continue to urge it, how fearful to think of the obligations we ſhall be under, after this war is finiſhed? Then ſhall we owe them all the ſums which they ſhall have laid out in ſubduing us, and all that we have ſpent in attempting to prevent it; all the blood which they ſhall have ſhed in attacking us, and all that we ſhall have ſpilt in our own defence. There is unqueſtionably a loſs to Great Britain by the one ſide of the account as well as the other; and it tends to ſhow, in the cleareſt manner, the unſpeakable folly, as well as great injuſtice of the promoters of this war.

Thus I have ſtated to you, though very briefly, the principles on which I think the American cauſe ought to be pleaded, and on which it ought to be eſpouſed and ſupported, by every lover of juſtice and of mankind. But though the general plea in juſtice were leſs clear than it is, there is a light in which the conduct of the oppoſers of it has always appeared to me unreaſonable and ungenerous to the higheſt degree. That reſiſtance to Great Britain has been determined on, in the moſt reſolute manner, through all the colonies, by a vaſt majority, is not only certain, but undeniable. In the beginning of the controverſy, ſome writers, with an impudence hardly to be paralleled, called the fact in queſtion, attempted to deceive the people in this country, and effectually deceived the people of England, by making them believe that it was only a few factious and violent men that had engaged in the conteſt. It is not very long ſince a writer had the courage to aſſert, that "nine tenths of the people of Pennſylvania were againſt independence." The falſhood of ſuch miſrepreſentations is now manifeſt, and indeed was probably known from the beginning by thoſe who deſired to have them believed. Taking this for granted, then, for an inconſiderable minority, whether natives or ſtrangers, to ſet themſelves in oppoſition to the public councils is contrary to reaſon and juſtice, and even to the very firſt principles of the ſocial life.

If there is any principle that was never controverted upon the ſocial union, it is, that as a body, every ſociety muſt be determined by the plurality. There was a time when it was not only juſt and conſiſtent, but neceſſary,

that every one ſhould ſpeak his mind freely and fully of the neceſſity or expediency of reſiſting the authority of Great Britain. But that time is over long ago. The meaſures being reſolved upon, and the conflict begun, one who is barely neuter can ſcarce be forgiven; a ſecret plodding enemy muſt be conſidered as a traitor. Every perſon who continued among us after the deciſive reſolutions formed by all the colonies, ought to be conſidered as pledging his faith and honor to aſſiſt in the common cauſe. Let me try to illuſtrate it by a ſimilar caſe. Suppoſe that a ſhip at ſea ſprings a leak, which expoſes the whole company to the moſt imminent danger of periſhing. Suppoſe a council is called of all the perſons on board, to determine what port they ſhall endeavor to gain. Then it is not only the right but the duty of every one to ſpeak his own judgment, and to preſs it upon others by every argument in his power. Suppoſe a great majority determines to puſh for a certain place, and to go to the pump by turns every quarter of an hour; but that two, or three, or one, if you pleaſe, is of opinion that they ſhould have gone another courſe, becauſe of the wind, current, or any other circumſtance, and that it would be beſt to change hands at the pump only every half hour. All this is well. But if after the determination, this ſame gentleman, becauſe his advice was not followed, ſhould refuſe to pump at all, ſhould ſlily alter the ſhip's courſe, or deaden her way by every means in his power, or even ſhould only by continual complaints and deſpondent fears, diſcourage others, on whoſe activity the common ſafety depended, I deſire to know what treatment he would receive or deſerve? Without doubt he would be thrown over board in leſs time than I have taken to ſtate the caſe. I am not able to perceive the leaſt difference between this ſuppoſition and what takes place in America at the preſent time.

If this argument is juſt with reſpect to every inhabitant of the country, it ought to have ſome additional weight with thoſe who are not natives, and whoſe reſidence is not certain or has not been long. There is a great degree of indecency in ſuch taking any part againſt what the majority of the inhabitants think to be their intereſt and that

of their country. Were they even wrong, their miſtake ſhould be lamented, not reſiſted; on the contrary, it would be the part both of generoſity and juſtice to ſupport them effectually in a conteſt which wiſdom would have declined. We ſee indeed, every day, melancholy inſtances of a baſe and ſelfiſh temper operating different ways. Many when they do not obtain that rank and honor which their pride and partiality think their due, or if their advice is not followed, immediately renounce the ſervice of their country, and it may go to deſtruction for them. In oppoſition to this, let me recommend the example of the illuſtrious Fabius of Rome. He had given ſtrict orders to all his officers not to engage the enemy, but to keep at a diſtance. Unluckily his lieutenant-general, by his own raſhneſs, got entangled with a part of the army under his command, and was engaged. Fabius, preferring his country's good to fame, rivalſhip, and ſafety, came immediately to his ſupport with all expedition, and thereby gained a glorious and complete victory.

I hope you will take in good part the above reflections, which I think contain nothing that is virulent or indecent againſt any man or body of men. They are the effects of judgment and conviction. The author, as is probably known to many of you, has been perſonally abuſed in news-papers at home, for the part he was ſuppoſed to have taken in the American cauſe, which was in ſome degree indeed the motive to this addreſs. He hopes that an honeſt and faithful ſupport of liberty and equal government in this part of the world, will be no juſt reproach to his character, either as a ſcholar, a miniſter, or a Chriſtian; and that it is perfectly conſiſtent with an undiminiſhed regard for the country which gave him birth.

The above is ſubmitted to your candid peruſal, by,

Gentlemen,

Your ſincere friend, and

Obedient humble ſervant,

The AUTHOR.

DELIVERED AT A PUBLIC THANKSGIVING AFTER PEACE.

SERMON 45.

PSALM iii. 8.

Salvation belongeth unto the Lord.

MY BRETHREN,

WE are met together in obedience to public authority, to keep a day of ſolemn thankſgiving to God, for the goodneſs of his providence to the United States of America, in the courſe of a war which has now laſted ſeven years, with a powerful and formidable nation. We are particularly called upon to give thanks for the ſignal ſucceſſes with which it hath pleaſed him to bleſs our arms and thoſe of our allies, in the courſe of the laſt year, and the campaign which is now drawing to a cloſe. I need ſay nothing of the importance of the great conteſt in which we have been ſo long engaged or the intereſting alternative which depends upon the iſſue, as theſe ſeem to have been felt in the fulleſt manner by all ranks in this country from the beginning. The language even of the common people will convince every man of reflection that they are univerſally ſenſible how much is at ſtake. My proper buſineſs therefore is to engage every pious hearer to adore the providence of God in general, to offer with ſincerity

and gratitude the ſacrifice of praiſe for his many mercies, and to make a wiſe and juſt improvement of the preſent promiſing ſituation of public affairs.

Many who now hear me are witneſſes, that it has never been my practice, for reaſons which appear to me to be good, to intermix politics with the ordinary ſervice of the ſanctuary, on the weekly returns of the chriſtian ſabbath, further than fervent ſupplications to the Throne of Grace for divine direction to the public counſels, and aſſiſtance to thoſe who are employed in the public ſervice. But on days of this kind it becomes part of a miniſter's duty to direct the attention of the hearers to events of a public nature. This you know I did with great concern and at conſiderable length ſix years ago on a public Faſt Day. I would therefore willingly in this more advanced period, take a view of what is paſt, and endeavor to direct you in what remains, of your duty to God, to your country, and to yourſelves.

For this purpoſe I have choſen the words of the Pſalmiſt David now read; which are part of a pſalm generally thought to have been compoſed by the royal author before the war with Abſalom his unnatural ſon, was wholly finiſhed, but when he had ſuch preſages of ſucceſs as made him ſpeak the language of faith and confidence. "I laid "me down and ſlept: I awaked, for the Lord ſuſtained "me. I will not be afraid of ten thouſands of people that "have ſet themſelves againſt me round about. Ariſe O "Lord, ſave me, O my God; for thou haſt ſmitten all "mine enemies upon the cheek-bone: thou haſt broken "the teeth of the ungodly. Salvation belongeth unto the "Lord; thy bleſſing is upon thy people. Selah."

In diſcourſing upon this ſubject, I propoſe, through the aſſiſtance of divine grace,

I. To explain and ſtate the proper meaning of this expreſſion or ſentiment of the inſpired pſalmiſt, "ſalvation "belongeth unto the Lord."

II. To lay before you a ſuccinct view of what the United States of America owe to Divine Providence in the courſe of the preſent war.

III. To make a practical improvement of the ſubject for your inſtruction and direction.

Firſt then, I am to explain and ſtate the proper meaning of this expreſſion or ſentiment of the inſpired pſalmiſt, "ſalvation belongeth unto the Lord." This I mean to do by adhering ſtrictly to what appears to be the mind of the ſpirit of God, in the paſſage before us, as well as in a manner agreeable to the analogy of faith. As religion is the ſame in ſubſtance in every age, the reflections of pious perſons in the courſe of providence ariſe from the ſame examples, and lead to the ſame end. The words may juſtly be ſuppoſed to contain the Pſalmiſt's thankful acknowledgment of the paſt mercies of God, as well as the foundation of his future ſecurity. They carry in them a general confeſſion of the influence of divine providence upon every event, and in particular with reſpect to *ſalvation*, or deliverance from impending danger. In this view when he ſays, "ſalvation belongeth unto the Lord," it ſeems to imply the three following things.

1. That "ſalvation belongeth unto the Lord," as diſtinguiſhed from human or created help, and therefore all confidence in man ſtands oppoſed to the ſentiment expreſſed by the holy Pſalmiſt in the text. It is not oppoſed to the uſe or application of, but to an exceſſive or undue reliance on human means, or ſecond cauſes of any kind. It implies, that ſucceſs in any attempt is to be ultimately attributed to God. That it is he who by his providence provides outward means, who raiſes up friends to his people, or cauſes *their enemies to be at peace with them.* That it is he who in caſes of diſficulty and danger, directs their hands to war and their fingers to fight, and finally crowns their endeavors with ſucceſs. Whether therefore the outward advantages are great or ſmall, whether the expectation or the probability of ſucceſs has been ſtrong or weak, he who confeſſes that ſalvation belongeth unto God, will finally give the glory to him. Confidence before, and boaſting after the event, are alike contrary to this diſpoſition. If any perſon deſires to have his faith in this truth, confirmed or improved, let him read the hiſtory of mankind, in a cool and conſiderate manner, and with a

ſerious frame of ſpirit. He will then perceive that every page will add to his conviction. He will find that the moſt important events have ſeemed to turn upon circumſtances the moſt trivial and the moſt out of the reach of human direction. A blaſt of wind, a ſhower of rain, a random ſhot, a private quarrel, the neglect of a ſervant, a motion without intention, or a word ſpoken by accident and miſunderſtood, has been the cauſe of a victory or defeat which has decided the fate of empires. Whoever with theſe facts in his view, believes the conſtant influence and over-ruling power of Divine Providence, will know what the Pſalmiſt means when he ſays, "Salvation be-"longeth unto the Lord."

2. In this ſentiment, the Pſalmiſt ſeems to have had in view the *omnipotence* of Providence; that nothing is impoſſible with God; that there is no ſtate ſo dangerous, no enemy ſo formidable, but he is able to work deliverance. He has not only the direction and government of means and ſecond cauſes, but is himſelf ſuperior to all means. The word *ſalvation*, when it is applied in ſcripture to temporal danger, generally ſignifies a great and diſtinguiſhed deliverance. Thus it is uſed by Moſes, Exodus xiv. 13. "Stand ſtill and ſee the ſalvation of God;" and in the ſame manner, 1 Sam. xiv. 45. "Shall Jona-"than die, who hath wrought this great ſalvation in Iſrael?" When, therefore, a perſon or people are threatened with evils of the moſt dreadful kind; when they are engaged in a conflict very unequal; when they are driven to extremity, and have no reſource left as means of defence: then if the cauſe in which they are engaged is righteous and juſt, they may cry to God for relief. The ſentiment expreſſed by the Pſalmiſt ought to bear them up againſt deſpair; and they may ſay as the angel to the father of the faithful, "Is there any thing too hard for the Lord?" There are many inſtances in ſcripture of ſignal deliverance granted to the ſervants of God, ſome of them even wholly miraculous, which teach us to ſet our hope in his mercy, and not to ſuffer his mighty works to ſlip out of our minds. This is the exerciſe of faith in an unchangeable God—"the ſame yeſterday, to-day, and for-ever."

3. This ſentiment has reſpect to the mercy and goodneſs of God, or his readineſs to hear the cry of the oppreſſed, and ſend deliverance to his people. This circumſtance is neceſſary to be taken in, to make him the proper object of faith and truſt; and it muſt be combined with the other, to give us a complete view of the influence of Providence. Power and wiſdom alone, give an imperfect diſplay of the divine character. It would give little ſupport under the preſſure of affliction, to have a general or theoretical perſuaſion, that all things are poſſible with God: but if we believe his readineſs to interpoſe, and ſee our title clear to implore his help, we have that hope which is juſtly called, "the anchor of the ſoul, ſure and ſtedfaſt." In this ſenſe, ſalvation belongeth unto God; it is his prerogative; it is his glory. The promiſe ſo often repeated in the ſame or ſimilar terms, is addreſſed both to nations and particular perſons. "He ſhall call upon me, and I "will anſwer him. I will be with him in trouble, to deli-"ver him, and to honor him. The righteous cry, and "the Lord heareth, and delivereth him out of all his trou-"bles. Many are the afflictions of the righteous: but the "Lord delivereth him out of them all."

Having briefly ſtated theſe known and general truths, I proceed to the ſecond and principal thing propoſed, which was to lay before you a ſuccinct view of what the United States of America owe to Divine Providence, in the courſe of the preſent war. On conſidering this part of the ſubject, a difficulty preſents itſelf as to the manner of handling it. I am deſirous of doing it ſome meaſure of juſtice, and at the ſame time of avoiding exceſſive prolixity, or a tedious enumeration of particular facts. To unite theſe two purpoſes as much as poſſible, I will divide what I have to ſay into diſtinct branches; and after a few words of illuſtration on each of them, leave it to every hearer to add ſuch further examples as may have fallen within his own obſervation. The branches I would ſeparately conſider, are the following: 1. Signal ſucceſſes or particular and providential favors to us in the courſe of the war. 2. Preſervation from difficulties and evils which ſeemed to be in

our ſituation unavoidable, and at the ſame time next to inſurmountable. 3. Confounding the counſels of our enemies, and making them haſten on the change which they deſired to prevent.

1. Signal ſucceſſes or providential favors to us in the courſe of the war. Here I muſt mention what happened at the beginning of the conteſt, and prevented us from being cruſhed in the very out-ſet, although it is now in a manner wholly forgotten. Let us remember our true ſituation, after we had made the moſt public and peremptory declarations of our determination to defend our liberties. There was a willing ſpirit, but unarmed hands. Our enemies have all along charged us with a deliberate concerted purpoſe of breaking with them, and ſetting up an independent empire. The falſhood of this accuſation might be made to appear from many circumſtances; as there being no pre-contract among the ſtates themſelves, nor any attempt to engage allies or aſſiſtance in Europe, and ſeveral others. But though there were no other argument at all, it is ſufficiently proved by the total want of arms and ammunition to ſupply us even during the firſt ſtages of reſiſtance. The nakedneſs of the country in this reſpect is well known; and our enemies endeavored to avail themſelves of it by taking every meaſure to prevent their being brought to us. This difficulty was got over by many providential ſupplies, without the care or foreſight of thoſe who were at the head of affairs, and particularly by many unexpected captures from our enemies themſelves.

How contrary to human appearance and human conjectures have many circumſtances turned out? It was univerſally ſuppoſed at firſt that we ſhould be able to do nothing at all at ſea, becauſe of the great naval power of the enemy; yet the ſucceſs of our private veſſels has been one of the moſt powerful means of diſtreſſing them, and ſupporting us. I cannot help in particular taking notice, that the eaſtern ſtates which were the firſt objects of their vengeance, were actually in their poſſeſſion, and ſeemed to be devoted to pillage and deſtruction; yet in a ſhort time they were delivered, and have in the courſe of the war

acquired a greater acceſſion of wealth and power than it is probable they could have done in the ſame period of ſecurity and peace.

It falls to be taken notice of under this branch of the ſubject, that our moſt ſignal ſucceſſes have generally been when we had the weakeſt hopes or the greateſt fears. What could be more diſcouraging than our ſituation at the cloſe of the year 1776? when, after general Howe's arrival with ſo powerful and well appointed an armament, our army enliſted but for a few months, was almoſt entirely diſperſed? Yet then did the ſurpriſe of the Heſſians at Trenton, and the ſubſequent victory at Princeton, raiſe the drooping ſpirits of the country, and give a new turn to our affairs. Theſe advantages redounded greatly to the honor of the commander in chief who planned, and the handful of troops with him, who executed the meaſures, as is confeſſed by all; yet were they of ſtill greater moment to the cauſe of America in general, than they were brilliant as military exploits. This place and neighborhood having been the ſcene of theſe actions, cannot but make them and their conſequences freſh in the memory of every one who now hears me.

The great victory over general Burgoyne and his army, (weakened at Bennington, and taken priſoners at Saratoga,) which opened the eyes of Europe in general, and in ſome degree even of Britain, happened at a time when many were diſcouraged. It happened when after the loſſes of Brandy-Wine and Germantown, the Britiſh were in poſſeſſion of Philadelphia, and the Congreſs of the United States were obliged to fly to a diſtant part of the country. It happened not long after our diſgraceful flight from Ticonderoga, and the ſcandalous loſs of that poſt, which was every where ſaid and thought to be the key of the continent, and the poſſeſſion of it eſſential to our ſecurity. We muſt not omit to obſerve that this victory over a numerous army of Britiſh regulars, was obtained by an army compoſed in a great meaſure of militia ſuddenly collected, and freemen of the country who turned out as volunteers.

In the ſame manner our late aſtoniſhing ſucceſs in the ſouth began when our affairs in that part of the continent wore a moſt diſcouraging aſpect. The year 1781, which began with mutiny in the northern army, and weakneſs in the ſouthern, produced more inſtances of gallantry and military prowefs than all the former, and was cloſed with a victory more glorious to us, and more humiliating to the enemy, than any thing that had before happened during the courſe of the war.

It was ſurely a great favor of Providence to raiſe up for us ſo great and illuſtrious an ally in Europe. This Prince has aſſiſted us, as you all know, in a very powerful and effectual manner, and has granted that aſſiſtance upon a footing ſo generous as well as juſt, that our enemies will not yet believe, but there muſt be ſome ſecret and partial ſtipulations in favor of himſelf and his ſubjects, although no ſuch thing exiſts.

Let me add to all theſe the providing for us a perſon who was ſo eminently qualified for the arduous taſk of commander in chief of the armies of the United States. I muſt make ſome apology here. None who know me, I think will charge me with a diſpoſition to adulation or groſs flattery of living characters. I am of opinion and have often expreſſed it, that the time for fixing a man's character is after death has ſet his ſeal upon it, and favor, fear and friendſhip are at an end. For this reaſon I do not mean to give a general or full character of the perſon here in view. But in ſpeaking of the kindneſs of Providence to the United States, it would be a culpable neglect not to mention that ſeveral of his characteriſtic qualities ſeem ſo perfectly ſuited to our wants, that we muſt conſider his appointment to the ſervice, and the continued health with which he has been bleſſed, as a favor from the God of heaven. Conſider his coolneſs and prudence, his fortitude and perſeverance, his happy talent of engaging the affection of all ranks, ſo that he is equally acceptable to the citizen, and to the ſoldier —to the ſtate in which he was born, and to every other on the continent. To be a brave man, or ſkilful commander, is common to him with many others; but this

country ſtood in need of a comprehenſive and penetrating mind, which underſtood the effect of particular meaſures in bringing the general cauſe to an iſſue. When we contraſt his character and conduct with thoſe of the various leaders that have been oppoſed to him, when we conſider their attempts to blaſt each others reputation, and the ſhort duration of their command, we muſt ſay that Providence has fitted him for the charge, and called him to the ſervice.

This head can hardly be better cloſed than with the extraordinary interpoſition of divine Providence for the diſcovery of the black treachery of Arnold, who intended to put one of the moſt important fortreſſes, and the general himſelf, into the enemies hands. This deſign was ripe for execution, and the time of execution was at hand. As there was no ſuſpicion of the traitor, no meaſures were, or could be taken for preventing it. The meeting of the ſpy with two friends of America, which was entirely caſual, the unaccountable embarraſſment of that artful perſon, when with a little addreſs, he might eaſily have extricated himſelf; and indeed, the whole circumſtances of that affair, clearly point out the finger of God.

I might have added many more inſtances of the favor of providence in particular events, but what have been mentioned, I think are fully ſufficient for the purpoſe, for which they are adduced, and will lead the hearers to the recollection of others of a ſimilar kind.

The ſecond part of my obſervations, muſt be on the difficulties and dangers, which ſeemed to be in our ſituation, unavoidable, and, at the ſame time, next to inſurmountable. The firſt of this kind, which I ſhall mention, is diſſenſion, or the oppoſition of one colony to another. On this our enemies reckoned very much, from the beginning. Even before the war broke out, reaſoners ſeemed to build their hopes, of the colonies not breaking off from the mother country for ages, upon the impoſſibility of their uniting their ſtrength, and forming one compact body, either for offence or reſiſtance. To ſay the truth, the danger was great and real. It was on this account,

foreſeen and dreaded, and all true patriots were anxious to guard againſt it. Great thanks, doubtleſs, are due to many citizens in every ſtate, for their virtuous efforts to promote the general union. Theſe efforts have not been without effect; but I am of opinion, that union has been hitherto preſerved and promoted, to a degree that no man ventured to predict, and very few had the courage to hope for. I confeſs myſelf, from the beginning, to have apprehended more danger from this, than from any other quarter, and muſt now declare, that my fears have been wholly diſappointed, and my hopes have been greatly exceeded. In the public councils, no mark of diſſenſion, in matters of importance, has ever appeared; and I take upon me further to ſay, that every year has obliterated colonial diſtinctions, and worn away local prejudices, ſo that mutual affection, is at preſent more cordial, and the views and works of the whole more uniform, than ever they were at any preceding period.

Having mentioned the union and harmony of the United States, it will be very proper to add, that the harmony, that has prevailed in the allied army, is another ſignal mercy, for which we ought to be thankful to God. It is exceedingly common for diſſenſion to take place, between troops of different nations, when acting together. In the Engliſh hiſtory, we meet with few examples of conjunct expeditions, with ſea and land forces, in which the harmony has been complete. Our enemies did not fail to make uſe of every topic, which they apprehended, would be inflammatory and popular, to produce jealouſies between us and our allies. Yet it has been wholly in vain. Not only, have the officers and ſoldiers of the American and French armies, acted together, with perfect cordiality, but the troops of our allies have met with a hearty welcome wherever they have been, from the people of the country; and indeed, juſt ſuch a reception as ſhows they were eſteemed to be of the utmoſt importance and utility to the American cauſe.

Another difficulty we had to encounter, was the want of money and reſources for carrying on the war. To remedy this evil an expedient was fallen upon which I do

not look upon myſelf as obliged either to juſtiſy or approve. It was, however embraced by the plurality as neceſſary, and upon the whole, leſs hazardous than any other, which in our ſituation was practicable. The difficulty of raiſing, clothing, paying and ſupporting an army with a depreciated currency, which its own nature, the arts of intereſted perſons, and the unwearied attempts of our enemies were puſhing on to annihilation, may be eaſily perceived. Yet the war has not only been ſupported, but we have ſeen the fall and ruin of the money itſelf without the leaſt injury to the public cauſe. Without injury did I ſay, it was to the unſpeakable benefit of the public cauſe. Many private perſons indeed, have ſuffered ſuch injury as not only merits pity, but calls for redreſs, and I hope the time will come, when all the redreſs ſhall be given that the nature of the thing and the ſtate of the country, will admit. In the mean time, when we reflect upon what is paſt, we have a proof of the general attachment of the country to the cauſe of liberty, the ſtrongeſt perhaps that can well be conceived, and we ſee a circumſtance from which we feared the greateſt evil, adding its force to many others, in blinding our enemies, miſleading their meaſures, and diſappointing their expectations.

Another difficulty we had before us was the being obliged to encounter the whole force of the Britiſh nation, with an army compoſed of raw ſoldiers, unacquainted with military diſcipline. The difficulty was increaſed by our own conduct, viz. filling our army with ſoldiers enliſted for ſhort periods. The views of thoſe who preferred this method was certainly very honorable, though the wiſdom of it is at leaſt very diſputable. They hoped it would make every man in America a ſoldier in a ſhort time. This effect indeed, it has in a good degree produced by the frequent calls of the militia, wherever the enemy appeared. They alſo apprehended danger from a ſtanding army, unconnected with civil life, who after they had conquered their enemies might give cauſe of jealouſy to their friends. The hiſtory of other countries in general, and in particular that of the civil wars in England againſt Charles the firſt, ſeemed to give plauſi-

bility to this reaſon, though from ſeveral circumſtances there was leſs cauſe of fear in America, than would have been in one of the European ſtates. However the meaſure was reſolved upon by the plurality at firſt, and we felt the inconvenience of it very ſeverely; but it pleaſed God to preſerve us from utter deſtruction, to ſet bounds to the progreſs of our enemies, and to give time to the ſtates to make better and more effectual proviſion for their final overthrow.

The only other danger I ſhall mention, was that of anarchy and confuſion, when government under the old form was at an end, and every ſtate was obliged to eſtabliſh civil conſtitutions for preſerving internal order, at the very ſame time that they had to reſiſt the efforts of a powerful enemy from without. This danger appeared ſo conſiderable that ſome of the king of Great Britain's governors ran off early, as they themſelves profeſſed, in order to augment it. They hoped that univerſal diſorder would prevail in every colony, and not only defeat the meaſures of the friends of liberty, but be ſo inſupportable to the people in general, as to oblige them to return to their ſubjection, for their own ſakes, and to be rid of a ſtill greater evil. This danger, through the divine bleſſing, we happily and indeed entirely eſcaped. The governors by their flight ripened every meaſure, and haſtened on the change, by rendering it viſibly neceſſary. Provincial conventions were held, city and county committees were every where choſen, and ſuch was the zeal for liberty, that the judgments of theſe committees was as perfectly ſubmitted to, and their orders more cheerfully and completely executed, than thoſe of any regular magiſtrates, either under the old government, or ſince the change. At the ſame time, every ſtate prepared and ſettled their civil conſtitutions which have now all taken place, and except in very few inſtances, without the leaſt diſcord or diſſatisfaction. Happily for us in this ſtate, our conſtitution has now ſubſiſted near ſeven years, and we have not ſo much as heard the voice of diſcontent. I ſpeak on this head, of what is known to every hearer, and indeed to the whole world; and yet I am perſuaded that to thoſe who reflect upon it,

it will appear next to miraculous. Although ſo much was to be done, in which every man was intereſted, although the colonies were ſo various and extenſive, and the parliament of Great Britian was threatening, and its army executing vengeance againſt us, yet the whole was completed in little more than a year, with as much quietneſs and compoſure, as a private perſon would move his family and furniture from one houſe, and ſettle them in another.

The third branch of my obſervations ſhall conſiſt of a few inſtances, in which the counſels of our enemies have been confounded, and their meaſures have been ſuch as to haſten on the change, which they deſired to prevent. As to the firſt of theſe, nothing can be more remarkable, than the ignorance and error in which they have continued from the firſt riſe of the controverſy, to the preſent time, as to the ſtate of things, and the diſpoſitions of men in America. Even thoſe at the head of affairs in Great Britain, have not only conſtantly given out, but in my opinion have ſincerely believed, that the great body of the people were upon their ſide, and were only miſled into rebellion by a few factious leaders. At the ſame time, the very ſame perſons, without being ſenſible of the abſurdity, have affirmed, that this country was groaning under the oppreſſion of its rulers, and longed to be delivered from it. Now theſe things could not both be true. If the firſt had been true, theſe leaders muſt have been popular and acceptable in a high degree, and have had the moſt extenſive influence. If the laſt had been true, they muſt have been inwardly and univerſally deteſted. But how many circumſtances might have convinced them of the falſehood of both theſe aſſertions? The vaſt extent of the ſtates, and the concurrence of all ranks and claſſes of men, which was ſo early, ſo uniform and ſo notorious, plainly prove, that no ſuch thing could have happened, without a ſtrong and rooted inclination in the people themſelves, and ſuch as no addreſs or management of intereſted perſons could have produced. Beſides, thoſe who know how fluctuating a body the Congreſs is, and what continual changes take place in it, as to men, muſt perceive the ab-

ſurdity of their making or ſucceeding in any ſuch attempt. The truth is, the American Congreſs owes its exiſtence and its influence, to the people at large. I might eaſily ſhow, that there has hardly any great or important ſtep been taken, but the public opinion has gone before the reſolutions of that body; and I wiſh I could not ſay, that they have been ſometimes very ſlow, in hearing and obeying it.

As to the other aſſertion, it was ſtill more manifeſtly falſe, and they had greater opportunities of perceiving it to be ſo. If Congreſs, or thoſe in public truſt, in any ſtate, had tyrannized over the people, or wantonly oppreſſed them, the uſurpation would, in the nature of things, have come to a ſpeedy period. But what if I ſhould ſay, that this pretence of our enemies, in an equivocal ſenſe, is indeed true; and yet this truth, doth but the more clearly demonſtrate their error and deluſion. It is true, that Congreſs has, in many inſtances, been obliged to have recourſe to meaſures, in themſelves hard and oppreſſive, and confeſſed to be ſo; which yet, have been patiently ſubmitted to, becauſe of the important purpoſe that was to be ſerved by them. Of this kind, was the emiſſion of paper money; the paſſing of tender laws; compelling all into the militia; draughting the militia to fill the regular army; preſſing proviſions and carriages; and many others of the like nature. Two things are remarkable in this whole matter: one, that every impoſition, for the public ſervice, fell heavieſt upon thoſe who were the friends of America; the lukewarm or contrary minded, always finding ſome way, of ſhifting the load from their own ſhoulders: The other that from the freedom of the preſs in this country, there never were wanting, the boldeſt and moſt inflammatory publications, both againſt men and meaſures. Yet neither the one nor the other, nor both united, had any perceptible influence in weakening the attachment of the people. If this account is juſt, and I am confident it is known to be ſo, by almoſt all who now hear me, what leſs than judicial blindneſs, could have made our enemies ſo obſtinate, in the contrary ſentiments? Such however we know has been the caſe,

and as the whole of their proceedings have been grounded on miſtakes, it is no wonder that they have been both injudicious and unſucceſsful.

This matter may be explained in the following manner. They ſuppoſed that they had only a few diſcontented particulars to apprehend and puniſh, and an army to conquer, in no reſpects comparable to their own; but in addition to this they had the loſt affections of a whole people to recover. The firſt, which was almoſt of no conſequence at all, they bent their whole force to effect in council and in the field. The other they ſuppoſed was already done, or not worth the doing; and therefore every meaſure they took had a quite different intention, and a quite oppoſite effect. In all this they were fortified and confirmed by the ſentiments, diſcourſe and conduct of the diſaffected in America. Theſe unhappy people, from the joint influence of prejudice, reſentment and intereſt, were unwearied in their endeavors to miſlead their friends. Their prejudice deſerves to be mentioned firſt. This was great indeed. They had generally ſuch an exalted idea of the power of Britain, that they really conſidered it as madneſs to reſiſt. I could mention many ſentiments uttered by them, which could hardly fail of making the hearers to ſmile at their groſs ignorance, and more than childiſh timidity. Reſentment alſo joined its force. They were ſometimes roughly handled by the multitude at the beginning of the controverſy. This led them to wiſh for revenge, and as they could not inflict it themſelves, to call for it from their friends in England. To theſe two circumſtances we may add that the road to favor was plainly that of flattery; and therefore their opinions and intelligence were generally ſuch as they ſuppoſed would be moſt acceptable to thoſe who had it in their power to provide for them, or promote them. Such was the effect of theſe circumſtances united, that time will conſtrain every body to confeſs, that the partizans and friends of the Engliſh in America, have done more eſſential injury to their cauſe, than the greateſt and boldeſt of their enemies.

The above diſtinction between overcoming the armed force of the ſtates, and regaining the people's hearts, is

the true key to explain the proceedings, and account for the events of the war. Every meaſure taken by Great-Britain, from the beginning, inſtead of having the leaſt tendency to gain the affections of the people of this country, had, and one would think muſt have been ſeen to have, the moſt powerful influence in producing the contrary effect. Without mentioning every ſeparate particular, I will only conſider a little the cruelty and ſeverity with which the war has been carried on; becauſe I am firmly of opinion, that the ſpirit and temper of our enemies in this conteſt, has been the principal cauſe of the diſappointment of their attempts. In this the cabinet and counſellors in Great-Britain, and the officers and ſoldiers of their armies in America, have nothing to reproach each other with. If the barbarity of the army has ever equalled, certainly it has never exceeded the cruelty of ſeveral of the acts of parliament. I will not enumerate theſe acts, which are ſo well known, and which ſome years ago were ſo often mentioned in every publication; but ſhall only tell you with what view I deſire you to recollect them. Every one of theſe acts, on their being known in America, ſerved to increaſe the union of the ſtates, to fill the heart of the citizens with reſentment, and to add vigor to the ſoldier's arm.

After the example of their employers at home, the commanders of the Britiſh armies, their officers and ſoldiers, and indeed all their adherents, ſeemed to have been animated with a ſpirit of implacable rancor, mingled with contempt towards the Americans. This is to be underſtood of the general run or greateſt number of every claſs, always admitting that there were particular exceptions, whoſe honor and principle controuled or overcame the national prejudice. Neither perhaps is it in any of them to be aſcribed ſo much to the national character, as to the nature and ſubject of the quarrel. It has been long obſerved, that civil wars are carried on with much greater fury, and attended with acts of greater barbarity, than wars between independent nations. The fact, however, of their barbarity is certain; and no leſs ſo is the powerful

influence which this conduct has had in defeating their expectations, either of reconciliation or submission.

The barbarous treatment of the American prisoners through the whole war, but especially at the beginning, when their enemies were confident of success, is a melancholy subject indeed, and will be a stain upon the British name to future ages. No part of America can be ignorant of this, having witnesses in every state, in the few that returned alive out of their hands. But we in this state, through which they passed to their homes, can never forget the appearance of the emaciated spectres who escaped or were exchanged from British dungeons or prison-ships. Neither was it possible for the people in general not to be struck with the contrast when exchanges took place, and they saw companies of British prisoners going home hale and hearty, bearing every mark of their having been supplied with comfortable provisions, and treated with humanity in every other respect. I am not to enlarge upon these known and fertile subjects. The only reason of their being introduced is to shew the effect which spectacles of this kind must have had upon the public mind, and their influence in rendering the return of the people of this country to submission to the parent state altogether impossible.

The inhuman treatment of the American prisoners by the British, was not more remarkable than their insolence and rapacity towards the people of the country wherever their power extended. The abuse and contempt poured upon the inhabitants in discourse, and the indiscriminate plunder of their property, could not but in the most powerful manner alienate their affections. Many who hear me at present, have had so full conviction of this truth in their own experience, that it is unnecessary to offer any proof of it. It is of importance however to observe, that this impolitic oppression was the true and proper cause of the general concourse of the inhabitants of this state to the American standard, in the beginning of the year 1777, and their vigorous exertions ever since against the incursions of the enemy from New-York. I confess I was not so much surprised at such conduct when

they poſſeſſed this part of the country; becauſe they were then fluſhed with victory, and had ſcarcely an idea that they would fail of final ſucceſs. But when we conſider that their conduct has been the ſame, or even worſe, in the ſouthern ſtates, we can hardly help wondering at their infatuation. Surely there was time enough before the year 1780, to have convinced them that inſolence and cruelty were not the means of bringing back a revolted people; and yet by all accounts their treatment of the inhabitants in Georgia, South and North Carolina, in that year, was even more barbarous than had been experienced by the people here three years before.

I ſhall only further mention, that it ſeems plainly to have been not by accident, but in conſequence of general orders or a prevailing diſpoſition, that they treated wherever they went, places of public worſhip (except thoſe of the epiſcopal denomination,) with all poſſible contempt and inſult. They were in general uſed not only for hoſpitals, but ſtore-houſes, barracks, riding ſchools and priſons, and in many places they were torn to pieces wantonly and without any purpoſe to be ſerved by it, but wreaking their vengeance on the former poſſeſſors. What influence muſt this have had upon the minds of the people? What impreſſion muſt have been made upon the few who remained, and were witneſſes to theſe acts of profanation, when in thoſe places where they had been accuſtomed to hear nothing but the word and the worſhip of God, their ears were ſtunned with the horrid ſound of curſing and blaſphemy. This was done very early in Boſton, and repeated in every part of the continent with increaſing rage.

I have choſen on this part of the ſubject to inſiſt only on what was general, and therefore muſt be ſuppoſed to have had an extenſive influence. It would have been eaſy to have collected many particular acts of barbarity, but as theſe might be accounted for from the degeneracy and ſavage diſpoſition of the perſons who were ſeverally guilty of them, they would not have been ſo concluſive for the purpoſe for which they were adduced. I ſhall therefore omit every thing of this kind, except one of the earli-

eſt inſtances of their barbarity, becauſe it happened in one of the ſtreets of this place, viz. maſſacreing in cold blood, a miniſter of the goſpel, who was not, nor ever had been in arms, and received his death wound, while on his knees begging mercy.

Upon the whole nothing appears to me more manifeſt than that the ſeparation of this country from Britain, has been of God; for every ſtep the Britiſh took to prevent, ſerved to accelerate it, which has generally been the caſe when men have undertaken to go in oppoſition to the courſe of Providence, and to make war with the nature of things.

I proceed to make ſome practical improvement of the ſubject, for your inſtruction and direction. And,

In the firſt place, it is our duty to give praiſe to God for the preſent happy and promiſing ſtate of public affairs. This is what we are called to, and making profeſſion of, by our meeting together at the preſent time. Let it then be more than a form. Let the diſpoſition of your hearts be correſpondent to the expreſſions of your lips. While we who are here alive before God this day, recollect with tenderneſs and ſympathy with ſurviving relations, the many valuable lives that have been loſt in the courſe of the war, let us give thanks to God who hath ſpared us as monuments of his mercy, who hath given us the ſatisfaction of ſeeing our complete deliverance approaching, and thoſe liberties civil and religious, for which we have been contending, eſtabliſhed upon a laſting foundation. It will be remembered by many, that I have early and conſtantly expreſſed my diſapprobation of ſelf-confidence, and vainglorious boaſting. To many American ſoldiers I have ſaid, ſeldom boaſt of what you have done, but never of what you only mean to do. This was not occaſioned by any doubt or heſitation I ever had as to the probable iſſue of the war, from the apparent ſtate of things, and the courſe of human events, but by a deep conviction of the ſinfulneſs of this practice, either in a nation or perſon. Now therefore that we have come ſo far in oppoſition to a formidable enemy, it is certainly our duty to ſay that "ſalvation belongeth unto the Lord." This indeed is not

only the duty of every perſon with reſpect to what is paſt, but is the way to ſupport and animate us in what remains of the warfare, and diſpoſe us to make a ſuitable improvement of the ſettlement which we hope is not very diſtant.

2. We ought to teſtify our gratitude to God for the many ſignal interpoſitions of his providence on our behalf, by living in his fear, and by a converſation ſuch as becometh the goſpel. This is not only a tribute we owe to him for every mercy, and therefore for thoſe of a public nature, but it is the only way by which public proſperity can become a real mercy to us. Eternity is of yet greater moment than any earthly bleſſing. Their ſtate is little to be envied who are free as citizens, but ſlaves as ſinners. All temporal comforts derive their value from their being the fruits of divine goodneſs, the evidence of covenant love, and the earneſt of everlaſting mercy. It is therefore our indiſpenſable duty to endeavor to obtain the ſanctified improvement of every bleſſing, whether public or perſonal. There is the greater neceſſity of inſiſting on this at preſent, that though a time of national ſuffering or jeopardy has ſome advantages for alarming the conſciences of the ſecure, it hath alſo ſome diſadvantages, and frequently occaſions ſuch diſtraction of mind as is little favourable to the practice of piety. We know by ſad experience that the regular adminiſtration of divine ordinances, the obſervation of the Sabbath, and the good order of the country in general, have been much diſturbed by the war. The public ſervice ſeemed many times to juſtify what would otherwiſe have been highly improper. This contributed to introduce a licentiouſneſs of practice, and to protect thoſe from reſtraint or reproof, who I am afraid in many caſes, rather yielded to inclination than ſubmitted to neceſſity. Now therefore, when by the bleſſing of God our diſtreſſes are removed, we ought to return to punctuality as to public order, as well as conſcientious ſtrictneſs in every part of our practice.

3. In the third place it is our duty to teſtify our gratitude to God, by uſefulneſs in our ſeveral ſtations, or in other words by a concern for the glory of God, the

public intereſt of religion, and the good of others. This is the duty of every perſon, even of the loweſt ſtation, at all times. Even the meaneſt and moſt unconnected hath ſtill ſome ſmall bounds, within which his influence and example may be uſeful. But it is eſpecially the duty of thoſe who are diſtinguiſhed from others by their talents, by their ſtation, or by office and authority. I ſhall at preſent conſider it chiefly as the duty of two ſorts of perſons, miniſters and magiſtrates, thoſe who have the direction of religious ſocieties, and thoſe who are veſted with civil authority. As to the firſt of theſe, they are under the ſtrongeſt obligations to holineſs and uſefulneſs in their own lives, and diligence in doing good to others. The world expects it from them, and demands it of them. Many of this claſs of men, have been peculiarly the objects of the hatred and deteſtation of the enemy, in the courſe of this war. Such therefore as have been ſpared to ſee the return of peace and ſecurity, are bound by the ſtrongeſt ties, to improve their time and talents, in their maſter's ſervice. But what I have peculiarly in view, is ſtrictneſs in religious diſcipline, or the inſpection of the morals of their ſeveral ſocieties. By our excellent conſtitution, they are well ſecured in their religious liberty. The return which is expected from them to the community, is that by the influence of their religious government, their people may be the more regular citizens, and the more uſeful members of ſociety. I hope none here will deny that the manners of the people in general, are of the utmoſt moment to the ſtability of any civil ſociety. When the body of a people are altogether corrupt in their manners, the government is ripe for diſſolution. Good laws may hold the rotten bark ſome longer together, but in a little time all laws muſt give way to the tide of popular opinion, and be laid proſtrate under univerſal practice. Hence it clearly follows, that the teachers and rulers of every religious denomination, are bound mutually to each other, and to the whole ſociety, to watch over the manners of their ſeveral members.

(2) Thoſe who are veſted with civil authority, ought alſo with much care, to promote religion and good morals among all under their government. If we give credit to the holy ſcriptures, he that ruleth muſt be juſt, ruling in the fear of God. It is a truth of no little importance to us in our preſent ſituation, not only that the manners of a people are of conſequence to the ſtability of every civil ſociety; but that they are of much more conſequence to free ſtates, than to thoſe of a different kind. In many of theſe laſt, a principle of honor and the ſubordination of ranks, with the vigor of deſpotic authority, ſupply the place of virtue, by reſtraining irregularities and producing public order. But in free ſtates, where the body of the people have the ſupreme power properly in their own hands, and muſt be ultimately reſorted to on all great matters, if there be a general corruption of manners, there can be nothing but confuſion. So true is this, that civil liberty cannot be long preſerved without virtue. A monarchy may ſubſiſt for ages, and be better or worſe under a good or bad prince; but a republic once equally poiſed, muſt either preſerve its virtue or loſe its liberty, and by ſome tumultuous revolution, either return to its firſt principles, or aſſume a more unhappy form.

From this reſults a double duty, that of the people themſelves, who have the appointment of rulers, and that of their repreſentatives, who are intruſted with the exerciſe of this delegated authority. Thoſe who wiſh well to the ſtate ought to chuſe to places of truſt, men of inward principle, juſtified by exemplary converſation. Is it reaſonable to expect wiſdom from the ignorant, fidelity from the profligate, aſſiduity and application to public buſineſs from men of a diſſipated life? Is it reaſonable to commit the mannagement of public revenue, to one who hath waſted his own patrimony? Thoſe therefore who pay no regard to religion and ſobriety, in the perſons whom they ſend to the legiſlature of any ſtate, are guilty of the greateſt abſurdity, and will ſoon pay dear for their folly. Let a man's zeal, profeſſion, or even principles as to political meaſures, be what they will, if he is without perſonal integrity and private virtue as a

man, he is not to be truſted. I think we have had ſome inſtances of men who have roared for liberty in taverns, and were moſt noiſy in public meetings, who yet have turned traitors in a little time. Suffer me on this ſubject to make another remark. I have not yet heard of any Chriſtian ſtate in which there were not laws againſt immorality. But with what judgment will they be made, or with what vigor will they be executed, by thoſe who are profane and immoral in their own practice? Let me ſuppoſe a magiſtrate on the bench of juſtice, adminiſtring an oath to a witneſs, or paſſing ſentence of death on a criminal, and putting him in mind of a judgment to come. With what propriety, dignity, or force can any of theſe be done by one who is known to be a blaſphemer or an infidel, by whom in his convivial hours every thing that is ſerious and ſacred is treated with ſcorn?

But if the people in general ought to have regard to the moral character of thoſe whom they inveſt with authority, either in the legiſlative, executive or judicial branches, ſuch as are ſo promoted may perceive what is and will be expected from them. They are under the ſtrongeſt obligations to do their utmoſt to promote religion, ſobriety, induſtry, and every ſocial virtue, among thoſe who are committed to their care. If you aſk me what are the means which civil rulers are bound to uſe for attaining theſe ends, further than the impartial ſupport and faithful guardianſhip of the rights of conſcience; I anſwer that example itſelf is none of the leaſt. Thoſe who are in high ſtation and authority, are expoſed to continual obſervation; and therefore their example is both better ſeen and hath greater influence than that of perſons of inferior rank. I hope it will be no offence in ſpeaking to a Chriſtian aſſembly, if I ſay that reverence for the name of God, a punctual attendance on the public and private duties of religion, as well as ſobriety and purity of converſation, are eſpecially incumbent on thoſe who are honored with places of power and truſt.

But I cannot content myſelf with this. It is certainly the official duty of magiſtrates to be "a terror to evil doers, "and a praiſe to them that do well." That ſociety will

ſuffer greatly, in which there is no care taken to reſtrain open vice by exemplary puniſhment. It is often to be remarked, in ſome of the corrupt governments of Europe, that whatever ſtrictneſs may be uſed, or even impartiality in rendering juſtice between man and man, yet there is a total and abſolute relaxation as to what is chiefly and immediately a contempt of God. Perhaps a ſmall treſpaſs of a poor man on property, ſhall be purſued by a vindictive party, or puniſhed by a tyrannical judge, with the utmoſt ſeverity; when all the laws againſt ſwearing, ſabbath-breaking, lewdneſs, drunkenneſs and riot, ſhall be a dead letter, and more trampled upon by the judges themſelves, than by the people who are to be judged. Thoſe magiſtrates who would have their authority both reſpected and uſeful, ſhould begin at the ſource, and reform or reſtrain that impiety towards God, which is the true and proper cauſe of every diſorder among men. O the ſhortſightedneſs of human wiſdom, to hope to prevent the effect, and yet nouriſh the cauſe! Whence come diſhoneſty and petty thefts? I ſay, from idleneſs, ſabbath-breaking, and uninſtructed families. Whence come deceits of greater magnitude, and debts unpaid? From ſloth, luxury, and extravagance. Whence come violence, hatred, and ſtrife? From drunkenneſs, rioting, lewdneſs, and blaſphemy. It is common to ſay of a diſſolute liver, that he does harm to none but himſelf; than which I think there is not a greater falſhood that ever obtained credit in a deceived world. Drunkards, ſwearers, profane and laſcivious jeſters, and the whole tribe of thoſe who do harm to none but themſelves, are the peſts of ſociety, the corruptors of the youth, and in my opinion, for the riſk of infection, thieves and robbers are leſs dangerous companions.

Upon the whole, my brethren, after we have contended in arms for liberty from foreign domination, let us guard againſt uſing our liberty as a cloak for licentiouſneſs; and thus poiſoning the bleſſing after we have attained it. Let us endeavor to bring into, and keep in credit and reputation, every thing that may ſerve to give vigor to an equal republican conſtitution. Let us cheriſh

a love of piety, order, induſtry, frugality. Let us check every diſpoſition to luxury, effeminacy, and the pleaſures of a diſſipated life. Let us in public meaſures put honor upon modeſty and ſelf-denial, which is the index of real merit. And in our families let us do the beſt by religious inſtruction, to ſow the ſeeds which may bear fruit in the next generation. We are one of the body of confederated ſtates. For many reaſons, I ſhall avoid making any compariſons at preſent, but may venture to predict, that whatſoever ſtate among us ſhall continue to make piety and virtue the ſtandard of public honor, will enjoy the greateſt inward peace, the greateſt national happineſs, and in every outward conflict will diſcover the greateſt conſtitutional ſtrength.

CHRISTIAN MAGNANIMITY.

SERMON 46.

Preached at Princeton, September, 1775, the Sabbath preceding the ANNUAL COMMENCEMENT; and again with Additions, September 23, 1787. To which is added, AN ADDRESS to the SENIOR CLASS, who were to receive the degree of BACHELOR of ARTS.

1 THESS. ii. 12.

That you would walk worthy of God, who hath called you into his kingdom and glory.

THE preſent ſtate was intended to be, and I think muſt, by every perſon of reflection, be admitted to be a continual trial of the faith and conſtancy of a Chriſtian. It is therefore a duty we owe to others in general, but in a ſpecial manner, the elder to the younger, to give them faithful warning of the temptations and dangers, to which they muſt, of neceſſity, be expoſed, if they mean to walk in the paths of piety and virtue. It hath often occurred to me, in meditating on this ſubject, that as falſe money is moſt dangerous, when it is likeſt to the true, ſo thoſe principles, and that character, which approach the neareſt to true religion, if notwithſtanding they are eſſentially different from it, will be moſt ready to impoſe on an uncautious and unſuſpecting mind. Therefore, if there

is such a thing as a *worldly virtue*, a system of principles and duty, dictated by the spirit of the world, and the standard of approbation or blame with the men of the world, and if this is at bottom, essentially different from, and sometimes directly opposed to the spirit of the gospel, it must be of all others, the most dangerous temptation, to persons of a liberal education and an ingenious turn of mind.

This, if I am not mistaken, is really the case. There are some branches of true religion which are universally approved, and which impiety itself cannot speak against; such as truth and integrity in speech, honesty in dealing, humanity and compassion to persons in distress. But there are other particulars, in which the worldly virtue, and the Christian virtue, seem to be different things. Of these I shall select one, as an example, viz. Spirit, dignity, or greatness of mind. This seems to be entirely of the worldly cast: It holds a very high place in the esteem of all worldly men: The boldest pretensions are often made to it, by those who treat religion with neglect, and religious persons with disdain or defiance. It is also a virtue of a very dazzling appearance; ready to captivate the mind, and particularly to make a deep impression on young persons, when they first enter into life. At the same time, the gospel seems to stand directly opposed to it. The humility of the creature, the abasement and contrition of the sinner, the dependance and self-denial of the believer, and above all, the shame and reproach of the cross itself, seem to conspire in obliging us to renounce it.

What shall we say then, my brethren? Shall we say that magnanimity is no virtue at all, and that no such excellence belongs to human nature? Or shall we admit that there is beauty and excellence in it—confessing at the same time, that it does not belong to religion, and only say, that though we want this, we have many other and better qualities in its place? To this I can never agree; for every real excellence is consistent with every other; nay every real excellence is adorned and illustrated by every other. Vices may be inconsistent with each other, but virtues never can. And, therefore, as magnanimi-

ty is an amiable and noble quality—one of the greateſt ornaments of our nature, ſo I affirm that it belongs only to true and undefiled religion, and that every appearance of the one, without the other, is not only defective, but falſe.

The Holy Scriptures, it is true, do chiefly inſiſt upon what is proper to humble our pride, and to bring us to a juſt apprehenſion of our character and ſtate. This was wiſe and juſt, becauſe of that corruption and miſery into which we are fallen, the contrary would have been unjuſt. It is evidently more neceſſary, in the preſent ſtate of human nature, to reſtrain pride, than to kindle ambition. But as the ſcripture points out our original dignity, and the true glory of our nature, ſo every true penitent is there taught to aſpire after the nobleſt character, and to entertain the moſt exalted hopes. In the paſſage which I have choſen as the ſubject of my diſcourſe, you ſee the Apoſtle exhorts the Theſſalonians to walk ſuitably to the dignity of their character, and the importance of their privileges, which is a ſhort but juſt deſcription of true and genuine greatneſs of mind.

My ſingle purpoſe, from theſe words, at this time, is to explain and recommend magnanimity as a chriſtian virtue; and I wiſh to do it in ſuch a manner, as neither to weaken its luſtre, nor admit any degree of that corrupt mixture, by which it is often counterfeited, and greatly debaſed. Some infidels have in terms affirmed, that Chriſtianity has baniſhed magnanimity, and by its precepts of meakneſs, humility, and paſſive ſubmiſſion to injury, has deſtroyed that nobleneſs of ſentiment, which rendered the ancients ſo illuſtrious, and gives ſo much majeſty and dignity to the hiſtories of Greece and Rome. In oppoſition to this, I hope to be able to ſhew that real greatneſs is inſeparable from ſincere piety; and that any defect in the one, muſt neceſſarily be a diſcernible blemiſh in the other. With this view, I will, firſt, give you the principles of magnanimity in general, as a natural quality; ſecondly, I will ſhew what is neceſſary to give it real value, as a moral virtue; thirdly, ſhew that it ſhines with the moſt perfect brightneſs as a Chriſtian grace;

and afterwards improve the subject, by a practical, application of what may be said, for your instruction and direction.

First, then, let me state the principles of magnanimity, in general, as a natural quality. I think it must be admitted, that as there is a real difference between bodies, as to size and bulk, as well as other sensible qualities, so there is a real character of greatness, or meanness, applicable to the mind, distinct from its other qualities or powers. It is, however, I apprehend, a simple impression, which cannot be explained, or further analysed, but may easily be felt, and is best illustrated by its effects. These may be summed up in the following particulars: To magnanimity it belongeth to attempt, 1. Great and difficult things: 2. To aspire after great and valuable possessions; 3. To encounter dangers with resolution; 4. To struggle against difficulties with perseverance; and, 5. To bear sufferings with fortitude and patience.

1. It belongs to magnanimity to attempt great and difficult things. Those who, from a love of sloth and ease, neglect the exercise or improvement of their powers, and those who apply them with ever so great assiduity and attention, to things mean or of small consequence, are plainly destitute of this quality. We perceive a meanness and want of spirit in this respect, when particular persons fall below their rank in life; or when, as is too frequently the case in any rank, they fall below human nature itself. When a prince, or other person of the first order and importance in human life, busies himself in nothing but the most trifling amusements, or arts of little value, we call it mean; and when any man, endowed with rational powers, loses them through neglect, or destroys them by the most grovelling sensuality, we say he is acting below himself. The contrary of this, therefore, or the vigorous exertion of all our powers, and particularly the application of them to things of moment and difficulty, is real magnanimity.

2. It belongs to magnanimity to aspire after great and valuable possessions. It is more difficult properly to illustrate this as a branch of magnanimity, because of its fre-

quent perverſion, which will be afterwards explained. It ſeems however, to be neceſſarily included in the general character. A great mind has great capacities of enjoyment as well as action. And as there is a difference between the bleſſings in our view, both in point of dignity and extent, ſuch a man will not be eaſily ſatisfied, or put up with what is either mean or ſcanty, while he can acquire and poſſeſs a better and more extenſive portion. The large and increaſing deſires of the human mind, have often been made an argument for the dignity of our nature, and our having been made for ſomething that is great and excellent.

3. It belongs to magnanimity to encounter dangers with reſolution. This is inſeparable from, and conſtitutes a leading part of the character. Even the moſt excellent and valuable ſervices to mankind, if they are attended with no difficulty at all, or meet with no oppoſition, though they retain the character of utility, yet, for want of this circumſtance, they loſe that of greatneſs.—Courage is always conſidered as a great quality; it has had the admiration, or rather adoration, of mankind in every age. Many when they ſpeak of magnanimity, mean nothing elſe but courage, and when they ſpeak of meanneſs, have little other idea but that of timidity.—Neither is there, I think, any human weakneſs that is more the object of contempt and diſdain, than cowardice, which when applied to life in general, is commonly called puſillanimity.

4. It belongs to greatneſs, to ſtruggle againſt difficulties with ſteadineſs and perſeverance. Perſeverance is nothing elſe but continued and inflexible courage. We ſee ſome perſons, who ſhew the greateſt activity and boldneſs for a ſeaſon, but time and oppoſition weakens their force, and ſeems, if I may ſpeak ſo, to exhauſt their courage, as if they waſted the power by the exertion. Perſeverance, therefore, is neceſſary to greatneſs. Few things are more contrary to this character, than ficklenеſs and unſteadineſs. We commonly join together the characters of weak and changeable.

5. In the laſt place, it belongs to greatneſs to bear ſufferings with fortitude and patience. This is a kindred quality to the former, and is neceſſary to complete the character of magnanimity. Such is the ſtate of human things, that ſuffering is in one way or another, wholly unavoidable. It often happens, that difficulties cannot be removed, or enemies cannot be conquered; and then it is the laſt effort of greatneſs of mind, to bear the weight of the one, or the cruelty of the other, with firmneſs and patience. This virtue has always been of the greateſt reputation. It is a well known ſaying of a heathen philoſopher, that a great man, ſuffering with invincible patience, under a weight of misfortunes, is a ſight, which even the gods muſt behold with admiration.

Having thus pointed out the principles, or rather enumerated the chief effects of magnanimity, as a natural quality, let us now, in the ſecond place, conſider what is neceſſary to give it real value, as a moral virtue. This is of the utmoſt importance, and muſt appear ſo to all who will conſider the ſubject with attention. That I may ſet the matter in as clear a light as poſſible, obſerve, that to render magnanimity a valuable quality, it muſt further have the following characters.

1. The object of our deſires muſt be juſt as well as great. Some of the nobleſt powers of the human mind, have often been exerted in invading the rights, inſtead of promoting the intereſt and happineſs of mankind. As the hiſtory of the world is little elſe than the hiſtory of human guilt; ſo, many of the moſt illuſtrious names, tranſmitted down to us, have been thoſe of the moſt active and ſucceſsful deſtroyers of their fellow-creatures. There may be, and there have been in ſuch perſons, many or moſt of the ingredients of natural greatneſs of mind; but theſe have only ſerved to make the characters, in the eye of reaſon, more hideous and deteſtable.

2. Our deſires ought to be governed by wiſdom and prudence, as well as juſtice. If any perſon either forms difficult projects, or aſpires after great poſſeſſions, and in proſecution of his purpoſes, exerts ever ſo much courage, fortitude and patience; yet, if theſe deſigns are leſs

uſeful, or theſe poſſeſſions leſs valuable, than others to which he might have applied the ſame talents, it cannot deſerve the name of true magnanimity. If any perſon, for example, forms a reſolution of exerting his ſkill, in ſuch feats or performances as have nothing or very little valuable in them, but that they are difficult and uncommon, I think no man will pretend that he has any title to the character of greatneſs of mind, otherwiſe a rope-dancer might be a hero: or, if any perſon ſhould ſpend a whole life, in the moſt unwearied application to the ſingle purpoſe of accumulating wealth, however vaſt his deſires, or however aſtoniſhing his ſucceſs, his merit would be very ſmall. Nay, we muſt be ſenſible that he has loſt many opportunities of doing ſignal ſervice to mankind, and of acquiring more valuable and durable enjoyments, while in purſuit of this, which after all will diſappoint his hopes.

3. The principle of action muſt be honorable as well as the achievements illuſtrious. If a perſon does things ever ſo extraordinary in their nature, overcomes the greateſt difficulties, or braves the moſt formidable dangers, merely to make his name famous, we muſt at once perceive how much it detracts even from his name itſelf. This is not the language of religion only, it is the language of reaſon, and the dictate of the human heart. An inſatiable thirſt for praiſe, is ſo far from being amiable, that it is hateful or contemptible. I am ſenſible that a thirſt for fame, is not only apparent in, but ſeems to have been confeſſed by many of the moſt diſtinguiſhed heroes of antiquity; but as it certainly does abate in a good degree, the luſtre of their good actions, ſo the indulgence that is given them, upon this head, is wholly owing to the diſadvantages they lay under, in a ſtate of heatheniſm, and their ignorance of a better and nobler principle.—"Nothing," ſays an eminent author, "can be great, the "contempt of which is great;" and therefore, if a contempt of riches, a neglect of fame, and a readineſs to ſacrifice both to duty and uſefulneſs, is one of the moſt glorious characters we can conceive, it is plain, that not the deeds, but the principle is the evidence, and not the

head nor the hands of man, but the heart is the ſeat of genuine greatneſs.

4. In the laſt place, in order to real greatneſs, every attempt muſt be poſſible and rational, perhaps probable. Nothing is more common than to find perſons, under the pretence of great and illuſtrious deſigns, proſecuting what is not of any value when obtained, and at the ſame time ſcarcely poſſible, and no way probable to be obtained at all. This is declining altogether from the line of greatneſs, and going into the path of extravagance. Again, ſhould any man undertake what he was altogether unable to perform, however excellent the deſign were in itſelf, we would not dignify it even with the name of ambition; he would acquire and deſerve the character, not of greatneſs, but of folly or madneſs.

On the whole, it is plain that theſe moral principles, muſt enter into the compoſition of true greatneſs, and that, when they are wanting, the natural characters mentioned before, degenerate into vice, and aſſume the names of pride, ambition, temerity, ferocity and obſtinacy.

This leads me, in the third place, to ſhew, not only that there is nothing in real religion contrary to magnanimity, but that there, and there only it appears in its beauty and perfection. Let me briefly run over, and apply to religion, the above-mentioned ingredients of magnanimity.

1. It is to attempt great and difficult things. Religion calls us to the greateſt and moſt noble attempts, whether in a private or a public view. In a private view, it calls us to reſiſt and ſubdue every corrupt and ſinful paſſion, however ſtrongly the indulgence is ſolicited by the tempting object, or recommended by the artful ſeducer. The importance and difficulty of this ſtruggle, appears not only from the holy ſcriptures, but from the experience and teſtimony of mankind in every age. What cautions are given by Solomon upon this ſubject? "He that is "ſlow to anger, is better than the mighty, and he that "ruleth his ſpirit, than he that taketh a city." The wiſeſt Heathens have inculcated the neceſſity of ſelf-government, and the danger of ſurrounding temptation, by many

inſtructive images. But why ſhould I extend this part of the ſubject? How few are ſucceſsful in this attempt? This alone is a ſufficient proof, that it is great and difficult, and every perſon exerciſed to godlineſs, will be abundantly ſenſible of it, from the ſtate of his own heart.

In a public view, every good man is called to live and act for the glory of God, and the good of others. Here he has as extenſive a ſcene of activity as he can poſſibly deſire. He is not indeed permitted to glory or to build an altar to his own vanity; but he is both permitted and obliged to exert his talents, to improve his time, to employ his ſubſtance, and to hazard his life in his Maker's ſervice, or his country's cauſe. Nor am I able to conceive any character more truly great, than that of one, whatever be his ſtation or profeſſion, who is devoted to the public good under the immediate order of Providence. He does not ſeek the bubble reputation in the deadly breach, but he complains of no difficulty, and refuſes no ſervice, if he thinks he carries the commiſſion of the King of kings.

2. The truly pious man aſpires after the greateſt and moſt valuable poſſeſſions. He deſpiſes, indeed, the uncertain and the unſatisfying enjoyments of time. His deſires after preſent enjoyments are ſubjected to the will of God. He has given them up without reſerve, yet his heavenly Father knoweth that he hath need of theſe things, and therefore he both aſks and hopes to receive what is ſuitable and neceſſary, and believes that a little that a juſt man hath, is better than the riches of many wicked. But the glorious object of the Chriſtian's ambition, is the inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away. The honorable relation he ſtands in to God, as his adopted child in Chriſt Jeſus, inclines and authoriſes him to hope for this purchaſed poſſeſſion, and enables him to look down with becoming indifference, on all the glory of this tranſitory world. Let the rich man glory in his riches, and the wiſe man glory in his wiſdom; he only glories in this, that he knoweth the Lord, and ſhall be with him for ever.

3. True piety encounters the greateſt dangers with reſolution. The fear of God is the only effectual mean to deliver us from the fear of man. Experience has abundantly ſhewn, that the ſervants of Chriſt have adhered to his cauſe, and made profeſſion of his name, in oppoſition to all the terrors which infernal policy could preſent to them, and all the ſufferings with which the moſt ſavage inhumanity could afflict them. But as this belongs to the caſe of perſecution for conſcience ſake, which, by the peculiar kindneſs of Providence is exceedingly rare among us, it is proper to obſerve, that every Chriſtian has frequent opportunities of manifeſting a holy reſolution in encountering the reproach and deriſion of worldly men, for adhering to his duty. And when we conſider how hard it is to bear reproach and ſcorn, called, in ſcripture, *the trial of cruel mockings*, there will appear to be no ſmall meaſure of dignity and heroiſm in him, who can calmly ſubmit to it from every quarter, rather than depart from his duty. There are not a few, who are apt to boaſt of their ſpirit and reſolution, who are yet unable to bear reproach, and meanly make the ſentiments of others, and the caprice of faſhion, the rule of duty, in place of the clear dictates of conſcience and the word of God. How contemptible is this, compared to the conduct of that man, who ſeeks no fame, but by honeſt means, and fears no reproach for honeſt actions, but contents himſelf with a ſilent and believing regard to him who ſeeth in ſecret, and who ſhall at laſt bring every work into judgment.

4. True piety perſeveres with conſtancy in oppoſition to continual trial. This is indeed what diſtinguiſhes the Chriſtian warfare from that of every other. It continues through life, and the laſt enemy to be overcome is death. In all the conflicts between men on earth, the iſſue may be ſpeedily expected, and the reward immediately beſtowed? but in religion, it is only he who ſhall endure to the end that ſhall be ſaved. This adds greatly to the difficulty, and ſeems to ſhew, not only the excellence and beauty, but the real dignity and magnanimity of the Chriſtian character.

5. In the laſt place, true piety endures ſuffering with patience and fortitude. If we reflect upon the number of ſuffering martyrs, whoſe teſtimonies are upon record, we ſhall ſee with what calmneſs and compoſure, with what undaunted firmneſs, and ſometimes with what exultation and triumph they have gone to a ſcaffold, or been tied to a ſtake. Can any perſon, think you, who hath gone to the field of battle in queſt of glory, or who hath braved the danger of the ſeas in queſt of wealth or power, be once compared with thoſe who have chearfully given up the precious life, or ſubmitted their bodies to the torture, to keep their conſciences undefiled? But, my brethren, Chriſtian patience is much more frequently tried in another manner. The believer has made an unreſerved ſurrender of himſelf and his all, to the diſpoſal of Providence: His faithfulneſs to this promiſe, is brought almoſt every day to the trial. For the Chriſtian then to ſuffer reproach, without rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing, to be ſubmiſſive under the loſs of ſubſtance, and ſay with Job, Job i. 21. "Naked came I out of my mother's womb, "and naked ſhall I return thither: the Lord gave, and "the Lord hath taken away; bleſſed be the name of the "Lord."—to yield up relations, and to ſay with David, 2 Sam. xii. 23. "I ſhall go to him but he ſhall not return "to me." To look forward to approaching death, and ſay with the apoſtle Paul, 2 Tim. iv. 6. "I am now rea-"dy to be offered, and the time of my departure is at "hand." This is magnanimity indeed; this is the moſt ſolid glory to which any child of Adam can poſſibly attain. I proceed in the laſt place, to make ſome practical improvement of what hath been ſaid.

1. You may learn, from what hath been ſaid, that whenever honor differs from conſcience, it is a treacherous guide; wherever ſpirit and dignity of mind, as a worldly virtue, differs from true religion, and even from the ſimplicity of the goſpel, it is falſe and ſpurious. The goſpel, it is true, will not ſuffer men to ſeek revenge, or to delight in it. It will humble them in the ſight of God, and make them ſelf-denied in the preſence of men, yet it will conſtrain them not to refuſe any duty to the one, or any

uſeful ſervice to the other. It will not ſuffer them to be ambitious of higher places of honor and truſt, but it will make them active and zealous in the duties of that place, in which they already are. It will not ſuffer them to reſent injuries and gratify revenge; but it will make them withſtand a king upon his throne, if he preſume to interfere in the matters of their God. What is there here that is not noble?

After all, the teſtimony in favor of true piety, is univerſal, if carefully attended to. Every one muſt acknowledge, that oſtentation, and love of praiſe, and whatever is contrary to the ſelf-denial of the goſpel, tarniſhes the beauty of the greateſt actions. Courage and modeſty, merit and humility, majeſty and condeſcenſion, appear with ten-fold glory, when they are united; it is impoſſible to ſeparate them; to divide, is to deſtroy them. They are like light and ſhade in a picture, which are neceſſary to each other, and which, by their union, conſtitute the beauty and augment the luſtre of the piece. So true is this, that the higheſt poliſh that any perſon can receive in commerce with the world, is to have an apparent diſpoſition to prefer the intereſt of others to his own, to guard againſt every degree of offence, and to be always ready to oblige. I have often been pleaſed with that obſervation of a foreigner of high rank,* that worldly politeneſs is only an imperfect imitation of Chriſtian charity; it is nothing elſe but a ſtudied appearance of that deference to the judgment, and attention to the intereſt of others, which a true Chriſtian hath, as the rule of his duty, and the diſpoſition of his heart.

2. Suffer me to obſerve, that as Chriſtian magnanimity is more excellent than that of the world, it is alſo more practicable, and, in fact, more univerſal. Worldly magnanimity is what always requires ſuch talents, as do not fall to the lot of many, and ſuch opportunities for its exerciſe, as ſeldom occur. The road to heroiſm is not open to every man. But that magnanimity, which is the fruit of true religion, being indeed the product of divine grace, is a virtue of the heart, and may be attained by perſons of

* The prince of Conti.

mean talents and narrow poſſeſſions, and in the very loweſt ſtations of human life. In fact, there have been, and are daily examples of it in every rank. We ſee the heroic fortitude of the martyrs, as manifeſt in thoſe of early years, and the weaker ſex, as in any other; and whoever will viſit the ſolitary walks of life, may find, in the loweſt ſtations, humility, thankfulneſs, patience under affliction, and ſubmiſſion to Providence, ſuch as would do honor to the moſt approved virtue, and the moſt enlightened mind. To deſpiſe riches, and reſtrain the motions of envy and impatience, in a needy ſtate, is perhaps as truly noble as to improve them wiſely in a higher.

Thus the honor which is chiefly deſirable, is equally open to the rich and to the poor, to the learned and to the unlearned, to the wiſe and to the unwiſe, as it cometh from God, who is no reſpecter of perſons. One of the beſt and happieſt effects of ſerious reflection is, to bring us, in a great meaſure, all upon a level; as, indeed, in one moſt important reſpect, the magiſtrate with his robes, the ſcholar with his learning, and the day-laborer that ſtands unnoticed, are all upon the ſame footing—for we muſt all appear before the judgment-ſeat of Chriſt.

AN ADDRESS

TO THE

STUDENTS OF THE SENIOR CLASS,

On the Lord's Day preceding Commencement,

September 23, 1775.

GENTLEMEN,

AS you have now finiſhed the uſual courſe of ſtudy in this place, and are to enter upon public life in a variety of ways, as each ſhall be determined by inclination or other circumſtances, I willingly embrace the opportunity of addreſſing an exhortation to you, at this important and intereſting period of your lives. I do not mean to ſay much, if any thing, that you have never heard before, but to lay hold of your preſent ſituation, with ſome hope, that what may be ſaid now, will remain upon your memory, and have an influence upon your future conduct. That I may ſpeak with the greater clearneſs and preciſion, I will divide what I have to ſay, into three branches. 1. Your duty to God, and the intereſt of your ſouls. 2. The proſecution of your ſtudies, or the improvement of your talents, as members of ſociety. 3. Prudence in your commerce with the world in general, your outward proviſion, and other circumſtances in life.

I. As to the firſt of theſe, it is to all men of the greateſt moment. Some of you, I know, and more, I hope, are intended for the ſervice of Chriſt in the miniſtry. To this we have the univerſal ſuffrage, that true religion is abſolutely neceſſary, with which I heartily agree. But I wiſh thoſe who are deſtined for other employments, may not ſometimes make a compariſon here, unjuſt in itſelf, and dangerous, perhaps even ruinous, to their own ſouls. Becauſe true religion is neceſſary to a miniſter, and they are conſcious to themſelves, or at leaſt ſuſpect, that they are without religion; inſtead of laying to heart the things that belong to their peace, they only determine that they will follow ſome other calling. But alas! though the difference to the public is very great, the difference to the perſons themſelves, ſeems to me but very ſmall. A clergyman without religion, to be ſure is a dreadful character, and, when viſible, a deteſtable one; but truly, one would think, at the cloſe of life, it will be but little comfort to a man, that he muſt go to the place of torment, not as a miniſter, but as a lawyer, phyſician, ſoldier, or merchant. Therefore ſuffer me to ſay to you, and to all who now hear me, that the care of your ſouls is the one thing needful. All mankind, of every rank, denomination and profeſſion, are ſinners by nature. The miniſters of the New Teſtament have received a commiſſion to preach the goſpel to every creature: "He that believeth ſhall be ſaved, and "he that believeth not ſhall be damned."

While I ſay this, I beg of you to conſider that the advantages which you have enjoyed, will be an aggravation of your guilt, if they are unimproved. There is an equity as well as wiſdom often to be obſerved in the providence of God. Unleſs reaſons of ſovereignty, that is, reaſons unknown to us, prevent it, judgment will be inflicted, when a perſon or people is ripe for the ſtroke. Therefore, as ſome plants and ſeeds, both from their own nature, and from the ſoil and ſituation in which they are placed, ripen ſooner than others, ſo ſome perſons, by the early pains taken upon them, and the privileges they have enjoyed, fill up the meaſure of their iniquities ſooner than others, and are more ſpeedily overtaken with deſerv-

ed vengeance. There are many common ſayings that are the effects of error and prejudice; for example, that which you will be told by many, that the children of good men are as bad as any. If this is intended to inſinuate that a regular and pious education affords no ground to hope for good behaviour in after life, it is at once contrary to reaſon and experience. But if we ſhould ſay that when young perſons piouſly educated, burſt reſtraining bonds aſunder, and are ſeduced into vicious courſes, they commonly run faſter and farther than others, it is a certain fact, which may be eaſily accounted for, and affords an important inſtruction to all.

After intreating you to lay religion to heart, I muſt beſeech you to guard againſt being too eaſily ſatisfied in a matter of infinite moment. Do not think it enough to be prudent, cautious, or decent in your conduct, or to attain a character formed upon worldly principles, and governed by worldly motives. I am not againſt (as you all know) introducing every argument againſt ſin, and ſhewing you that looſe practices are ruinous to name, body and eſtate. Neither is it wrong that you ſhould fortify every pious reſolution by the addition of theſe motives. But alas! the evil lies deeper. "Except a man be born "again, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." True religion muſt ariſe from a clear and deep conviction of your loſt ſtate by nature and practice, and an unfeigned reliance on the pardoning mercy and ſanctifying grace of God.

Suffer me, upon this ſubject, earneſtly to recommend to all that fear God, to apply themſelves from their earlieſt youth, to the exerciſes of piety, a life of prayer and communion with God. This is the ſource from which a real Chriſtian muſt derive the ſecret comfort of his heart, and which alone will give beauty, conſiſtency, and uniformity, to an exemplary life. The reaſon why I have mentioned it on this occaſion is, that youth, when the ſpirits are lively and the affections vigorous and ſtrong, is the ſeaſon when this habit muſt be formed. There are advantages and diſadvantages attending every ſtage of life. An aged Chriſtian will naturally grow in prudence, vigilance, uſe-

fulneſs, attention to the courſe of providence, and ſubjection to the divine will, but will ſeldom attain to greater fervor of affection, and life in divine worſhip, than he had been accuſtomed to from his early years. On the contrary, he will generally ſee it neceſſary inſtead of truſting to occaſional impulſes, to guard and ſtrengthen the habit by order and form.

Be companions of them that fear God. Eſteem them always moſt highly, and ſhun, as a contagious peſtilence, the ſociety not only of looſe perſons, but of thoſe eſpecially whom you perceive to be infected with the principles of infidelity, or enemies to the power of religion.—Many of theſe are much more dangerous to pious perſons than open profligates. As for theſe laſt, decency is againſt them; the world itſelf condemns them; reaſon deſpiſes them, and prudence ſhuns them. He muſt have a very mean taſte indeed, who is capable of finding pleaſure in diſorder and riot. If I had no higher pleaſure on earth than in eating and drinking, I would not chooſe to eat and drink with the drunken. Order, neatneſs, elegance, and even moderation itſelf, are neceſſary to exalt and refine the pleaſures of a ſenſual life. Therefore I will not allow myſelf to ſuppoſe, that I ſhall afterwards hear of any of you roaring and ſwearing in taverns, or waſting your bodies and eſtates by lewdneſs and debauchery, or that you take pleaſure in thoſe who do ſo. But be eſpecially careful to avoid thoſe who are enemies to vital piety, who do not pretend to ſpeak directly againſt religion, but give every vile name they can think of to all who ſeem to be in earneſt on that ſubject, and vilify the exerciſes of religion, under the names of whining, cant, grimace, and hypocriſy. Theſe are often unhappily ſucceſsful in making ſome uncautious perſons aſhamed of their Redeemer's name, his truths, his laws, his people, and his croſs.

I need hardly obſerve, that this is not to be underſtood as recommending phariſaical pride and ſupercilioufneſs; far leſs, a raſh and preſumptuous judging of the ſtate of others. It is not only lawful, but our duty, to have a free communication with our fellow-citizens, for the purpoſes of ſocial life: it is not only lawful, but our duty to be

courteous, and to give every proper evidence of reſpect and attention to others, according to their rank and place in ſociety. What I mean to caution you againſt is, an unneceſſary, voluntary intercourſe, ſuch as has inclination for its motive, and pleaſure for its object. With reſpect to this, we need not heſitate to ſay, with the inſpired prophet, "He that walketh with wiſe men ſhall be wiſe, but "a companion of fools ſhall be deſtroyed."

II. I come now to ſpeak a little upon the proſecution of your ſtudies, and the improvement of your talents. Your education in a ſeminary of learning, is only intended to give you the elements and firſt principles of ſcience, which ſhould whet your appetite for more, and which will enable you to proceed with an aſſured hope of ſucceſs. It hath been generally a favorite point with me, to recommend the union of piety and literature, and to guard young perſons againſt the oppoſite extremes. We ſee ſometimes the pride of unſanctified knowledge do great injury to religion; and on the other hand, we find ſome perſons of real piety, deſpiſing human learning, and diſgracing the moſt glorious truths, by a meanneſs and indecency hardly ſufferable in their manner of handling them. On this account, induſtry and application to ſtudy, is of the utmoſt importance to thoſe who are intended for the office of the miniſtry.

But I have it further in view, to recommend to you all, without exception, a life of diligence and application. Avoid ſloth, as a dangerous enemy. Fear it, hate it, and deſpiſe it. It is a common ſaying, that men do not know their own weakneſs; but it is as true, and a truth more important, that they do not know their own ſtrength. I deſire that you will receive the following information from me, which I dare ſay, every perſon of judgment and experience will confirm, that multitudes of moderate capacity have been uſeful in their generation, reſpected by the public, and ſucceſsful in life, while thoſe of ſuperior talents from nature, by mere ſlothfulneſs and idle habits, or ſelf-indulgence, have lived uſeleſs, and died contemptible. There is alſo a diſpoſition in young people, which you

know I have often ſet myſelf to oppoſe, to think that looſe, irregular ſallies, and ſometimes even vicious liberties, are a ſign of ſpirit and capacity. The very contrary is the truth. It requires no genius at all to do miſchief. Perſons of the greateſt ability have generally been lovers of order. Neither is there any inſtance to be found, of a man's arriving at great reputation or uſefulneſs, be his capacity what it might, without induſtry and application.

Suffer me here, in a particular manner, to recommend to you a firmneſs of mind, and ſteady perſeverance, as of the utmoſt moment to your progreſs and ſucceſs. Whatever a man's talents from nature may be, if he apply himſelf to what is not altogether unſuitable to them, and holds on with ſteadineſs and uniformity, he will be uſeful and happy; but if he be looſe and volatile, impatient of the ſlowneſs of things in their uſual courſe, and ſhifting from project to project, he will probably be neither the one nor the other.

I am ſomewhat at a loſs what to ſay, as to character and reputation; yet it is ſo important a point, that it muſt not be omitted. True religion ſhould furniſh you with a higher and nobler principle to govern your conduct, than the deſire of applauſe from men. Yet, in ſubordination to what ought to be the great purpoſe of life, the approbation of the ſupreme Judge, there is a juſt and laudable ambition to do what is praiſe-worthy among men. This ought not to be extinguiſhed in the minds of youth; being a powerful ſpur and incitement to virtuous or illuſtrious actions. A truly good man will ſeek no praiſe but by honeſt means, and will be ſuperior even to diſgrace itſelf, if brought upon him by adherence to his duty. Yet he will alſo be tender and careful, not to give juſt cauſe to any to impeach his conduct. If I might be permitted to direct your views upon this ſubject, I would ſay, conſider that your character is already beginning to form. Every ſtep you take further in life, will both aſcertain and ſpread it. You ought alſo to be informed, that notwithſtanding all the hackneyed complaints of the partiality and cenſoriouſneſs of the world, a man's real character, in point of ability, is *never* miſtaken, and but *ſeldom* in point of morals. That there are many malicious and cenſorious perſons, I

agree: but lies are not half ſo durable as truth. There is an impartiality in a diffuſive public, which will ſhew itſelf where means of information are afforded to it. Therefore reverence the judgment of mankind without idolizing it. Be as cautious as poſſible to do nothing that deſerves cenſure, and as little concerned as poſſible what reproaches may fall upon you undeſerved. It is not a contradiction, but perfectly conſiſtent to ſay, a man ſhould be tender and even jealous of his character, and yet not greedy of praiſe. There is an amiableneſs and dignity in the firſt, but a meanneſs and littleneſs in the laſt.

Another advice, near a-kin to the laſt, is, do as much as you can to deſerve praiſe, and yet avoid as much as poſſible the hearing of it. This is but another view of the ſame ſubject; and that it may be the more uſeful, and my intention in it the more manifeſt, I will extend it both to praiſe and diſpraiſe. When you come into public life, and become the objects of general attention, not only guard againſt fiſhing for applauſe, and being inquiſitive after what people think or ſay of you, but avoid knowing it as much as you decently can. My reaſon for this is, that whether you will or not, you will hear as much of the ſlanders of your enemies as you will bear with patience, and as much of the flattery of your friends, or intereſted perſons, as you will bear with humility. Therefore, prepare yourſelf for both, but ſeek for neither. Several eminent authors, as you doubtleſs know, have given it as an advice to young clergymen, and other public ſpeakers, t get a friend who is a good judge, and intreat him to m remarks upon their compoſition, carriage, delivery with fidelity. I have nothing to ſay againſt the g of the advice in itſelf, but at the ſame time, ' great conviction of the neceſſity or even the ' It is very ſeldom that advice is aſked in this with a view to obtain a compliment; and that it is given with ſufficient freedom an any man has humility and ſelf-denial know his own faults, there will be l covering them. Or if we could ficulty to himſelf, his enemies or

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.uppoſe, there were diſ-
rivals, or talkative peo-

ple, though they be neither the one nor the other, will ſupply the defect. Perhaps you will think, that in the ſtrictures of malice and envy, there is generally an acrimony that has no great tendency to reform; like a ruſty knife, which makes a very painful wound, though not very deep. I agree to this fully, and yet affirm, that there ſo much the more virtue, ſo much the more wiſdom, and perhaps I may add, ſo much the more pleaſure in making this uſe of them.

I conclude this part of my ſubject, with adviſing you to maintain a friendſhip with one another, and to carry the intimacies of early life through the whole of it. To this I add, that you ought to deſire and cultivate the correſpondence of men of piety and learning. Man made for ſociety, derives his chief advantages of every kind, from the united efforts of many conſpiring to the ſame end.—As to piety, nothing is more eſſential to it, than ſocial communication. It properly conſiſts in the ſupreme love of God, and fervent charity to all men. The Chriſtian alſo hath need of the aſſiſtance of others in his paſſage through this world, where he has ſo much oppoſition to encounter. Thoſe who deſerve this character, are ſaid to be pilgrims and ſtrangers in the earth. Therefore they ought to keep together, leſt they loſe their way. They comfort each other in diſtreſs, they aſſiſt each other in doubts and difficulty, they embolden each other by their example, and they aſſiſt each other by their prayers.

This is no leſs the caſe in reſpect to literature. It has been obſerved, that great and eminent men have generally, in every nation, appeared in cluſters. The reaſon of this probably is, that their ſociety and mutual intercourſe greatly adds to their improvement, and gives force and vigor to the talents which they may ſeverally poſſeſs. Nothing is ſo powerful an incitement to diligence, or ſo kindles the beſt ſort of ambition, as the friendſhip, advice, and aſſiſtance of men of learning and worth. The approbation of one ſuch, is of more value to a noble mind, than peals of applauſe from an undiſcerning multitude. Beſides, the aſſiſtance which men of letters give to each other, is really neceſſary in the execution of particular works of

great compaſs and utility. If it is by the labors of preceding ages, that it is now poſſible in one life to attain to ſuch a degree of knowledge as we have ſometimes ſeen, ſo it is by the concurrence of many friends lending their aſſiſtance, that one man has been ſometimes able to preſent to the public, a ſyſtem of ſcience, which, without that aid, he alone would have in vain attempted to bring to perfection. There is no circumſtance which throws this new country ſo far back in point of ſcience, as the want of public libraries, where thorough reſearches might be made, and the ſmall number of learned men to aſſiſt in making reſearches practicable, eaſy or complete.

III. The laſt head on which I promiſed to give you my advice, was prudence in your communication with the world in general, your outward proviſion and other circumſtances that conduce to the happineſs and comfort of life. On this ſubject, I begin with what I have often recommended to you, frugality in the management of your affairs, order and exactneſs in your dreſs, furniture, books, and keeping of accompts. Nothing could be further from my mind than to recommend the temper or conduct of avaricious men, whoſe ſordid ſouls have no higher ambition, and indeed, hardly any other deſire than that of getting pelf. This is not only unbecoming a gentleman and a ſcholar, but, in my opinion, wholly inconſiſtent with the character. I never knew an inſtance of a perſon in whom this diſpoſition took place in early life, that could apply to ſtudy, or that became eminent in any thing that was good. The oppoſite vice is the common fault of youth, and it is againſt this I would caution you. The frugality I would recommend, is that of an independent mind, that fears and ſcorns ſubjection to others, and remembers the juſt ſaying of Solomon, that *the borrower is servant to the lender*. That frugality which ariſes from order and œconomy, is not only conſiſtent with, but it is the parent of liberality of ſentiment and generoſity of conduct. It is indeed the ſource of beneficence, for no man can beſtow out of an empty purſe. On the other hand, covetouſneſs and profuſion are by no means repugnant to each other;

and indeed they are more frequently joined than many apprehend. The ſtricture of Salluſt in the character of Cataline, *alieni appetens, ſui profuſus*, has been often cited, and may generally be applied to looſe and profligate livers. I hope therefore you will learn betimes to diſtinguiſh between the virtue and the vice, and to adhere to the one as much as you deſpiſe the other.

I will make an obſervation here, which may be applied not only to the diſtinction of character in this inſtance, but in almoſt every other that has been, or ſhall be mentioned. It will be much your intereſt, if you learn betimes to make not a haſty but a deliberate and candid judgment, when you infer character from appearances. The habits of life which men contract, give a bias to their opinions and even a tincture to their converſation and phraſeology. Perſons inclined to levity and diſſipation, will often aſcribe to covetouſneſs, what ariſes from very different cauſes. I have known, even in youth, a perſon declining to engage in a party of pleaſure, accuſed by his companions as mean and ſneaking, and afraid of his purſe, when, in reality, it was not that he loved money more, but pleaſure leſs. It may ſometimes happen, that a perſon of principle will ſee it proper to decline meetings of feſtivity, though not directly ſinful, as an unneceſſary waſte of time, or from ſome other circumſtance to him dangerous and enſnaring. I have alſo ſeen perſons more advanced in years, who from a habit, perhaps a neceſſary habit of ſtrict temperance, and retired manner of life, were very ſparing of perſonal expence, and even not much diſpoſed to ſocial intercourſe, and therefore called cloſe or covetous, and yet when applied to, for pious or charitable purpoſes, would be much more liberal than others of an oppoſite turn of mind. Obſervations perfectly ſimilar might be made upon the oppoſite character of liberality. It is not every kind of openneſs of heart that indicates profuſion. We are told by Solomon, Prov. xi. 25. "That the liberal "ſoul ſhall be made fat," and by the prophet Iſaiah, Iſa. xxxii. 8. "That the liberal deſireth liberal things, and "by liberal things he ſhall be eſtabliſhed." From theſe contraſted remarks, I infer, that as it is ſeldom neceſſary

to judge peremptorily of others, ſo forbearance and the moſt charitable allowance, is both our duty and intereſt.

In the next place, I recommend to you, humility of heart and meekneſs of carriage. I conſider in this place, the grace of humility as a virtue eſpecially ſerviceable to your earthly comfort. I conſider and mean to treat it as a maxim of worldly prudence. The ſcripture ſeems to point it out as peculiarly neceſſary for this purpoſe, and to annex the promiſe of earthly happineſs to the practice of it: Matth. v. 5. "Bleſſed are the meek," ſays our Saviour, "for they ſhall inherit the earth." I would underſtand him as ſaying, every good man ſhall inherit the kingdom of heaven, but thoſe who excel in meekneſs, ſhall of all others have comfort on earth. In many different views, we may ſee the propriety of this connexion. Nothing is more offenſive to others, than a proud, aſſuming manner. It not only magnifies every fault, but vitiates even good conduct. It is not only odious to virtuous perſons, but it is equally, if not more ſo, to thoſe who are without principle. Some vices recommend a man to the vicious in the ſame line, as one drunkard is pleaſed with the ſight of another; but nothing is ſo hateful to a proud man, as another of the ſame character, nor is offence ſooner given or taken than between thoſe, who in this reſpect, perfectly reſemble one another. This vice is not only odious to perſons of underſtanding and reflection, but to the moſt ignorant, being as eaſily perceived as it is univerſally hated.

The moral virtue of meekneſs and condeſcenſion, is the beſt ground work even of worldly politeneſs, and prepares a man to receive that poliſh, which makes his behaviour generally agreeable, and fits him for intercourſe with perſons in the higher ranks of life. The ſame virtue, by the compoſure and ſelf-command that accompanies it, enables a man to manage his affairs to advantage, in whatever calling he may be engaged, or in whatever ſtation he may be placed. A good ſhopkeeper is commonly remarkable for this quality. People love to go where they meet with good words and gentle treatment; whereas the peeviſh and petulant may be ſaid to have a

repelling quality about them, that will not ſuffer any body to approach them.

To complete the whole, meekneſs of ſpirit is as uſeful to a man's ſelf, as meekneſs of carriage is acceptable to others. The meek ſuffer much leſs from the unavoidable evils of life, than thoſe of a contrary diſpoſition. Many croſs accidents of the leſs important kind, are in a manner annihilated when they are borne with calmneſs. The injury they do us, is not owing half ſo much to their weight or ſeverity, as to the irritability of their own minds. It is evident that the ſame diſpoſition muſt greatly alleviate calamities of a heavier kind; and from analogy you may perceive, that as it mitigates the ſorrows, it multiplies and adds to the ſweetneſs of the comforts of life. A moderate portion, gives greater ſatisfaction to the humble and thankful, than the moſt ample poſſeſſions to the proud and impatient.

Nearly allied to the above virtue, is the government of your paſſions, and therefore of this I ſhall ſay but little. Every one muſt be ſenſible how important it is, both for the ſucceſs of your worldly callings, and your uſefulneſs in public life, to have your paſſions in due ſubjection. Men of furious and ungoverned tempers, prone to exceſs in attachment and reſentment, either as to perſons or things, are ſeldom ſucceſsful in their purſuits, or reſpected and uſeful in their ſtations. Perſons of ungoverned paſſions, are almoſt always fickle and changeable in their meaſures, which is of all things the moſt fatal to important undertakings. Theſe generally require time and patience to bring them to perfection. As to public and political life in particular, the neceſſity of ſelf government is ſo great, and ſo univerſally acknowledged, that it is uſual to impute it in eminent men, not to principle, but to addreſs and policy. It is commonly ſaid, that politicians have no paſſions. Without inquiring into this, I ſhall only ſay, that whatever truth may be in it, is ſtill in favor of my argument. The hypocriſy does honor to the virtue. If the appearance be ſo neceſſary or ſo uſeful, what muſt be the value of the reality?

I will here take an opportunity of confuting, or at leaſt correcting a common ſaying or proverbial ſentiment, many of which indeed that obtain belief in a blinded world, are nothing but falſe colouring and deception. It is uſual to ſay, in defence of ſudden and violent paſſion, that it is better to ſpeak freely and openly, than to harbor and cover ſecret heart malice. Perhaps I might admit that this would be true, if the inward rage were to be as violent, and continue as long, and return as often, as indulged paſſion. Every perſon muſt agree, that wherever there is a deep and laſting hatred, that never forgets nor forgives, but waits for the opportunity of vengeance, it deſerves to be conſidered as a temper truly infernal. But in moſt inſtances of offence between man and man, to reſtrain the tongue is the way to govern the heart. If you do not make mention of an injury, you will truly and ſpeedily forgive it, and perhaps literally forget it. Rage is in this reſpect like a fire, if a vent is given to it, it will increaſe and ſpread, while there is fuel to conſume, but if you can confine and ſtifle it, you will completely extinguiſh it.

To the government of the paſſions ſucceeds the government of the tongue. This indeed will in a great meaſure, be the effect of the former, and therefore is recommended by all the ſame arguments, yet it deſerves very particular attention, ſeparately as a maxim of prudence. There are great indiſcretions in ſpeech, that do not ariſe from paſſion, but from inattention and want of judgment as to the propriety of time and place, and indeed many other ſources. I would therefore earneſtly recommend to you, to habituate yourſelves to reſtraint in this reſpect, eſpecially in the early part of life. "Be ſwift to hear," ſays St. James, "and ſlow to ſpeak." Forwardneſs in ſpeech is always thought an aſſuming thing in youth, and in promiſcuous companions, is often conſidered as an inſult, as well as an indiſcretion. It is very common for the world in general, and ſtill more ſo for men of judgment and penetration, to form an opinion of a character on the whole, from ſome one circumſtance, and I think there are few things more unfavorable in this way than a talka-

tive diſpoſition. If the firſt time I am in company, eſpecially with a young man, he talks inceſſantly and takes the whole converſation to himſelf, I ſhall hardly be brought to have a good opinion of him, whether what he ſays be good or evil, ſenſe or nonſenſe. There are ſome perſons, who, one might ſay, give away ſo much wiſdom in their ſpeech, that they leave none behind to govern their actions.

But the chief danger of an ungoverned tongue, is, that it kindles the fire of contention among others, and makes enemies to a man's ſelf. Solomon ſays, "Where no tale-"bearer is, the ſtrife ceaſeth." A little experience will ſhew you, how unſafe it is to uſe much freedom in ſpeech with abſent perſons. In that caſe you put yourſelf wholly in the power of thoſe that hear you, and are in danger, not only from their treachery or malice, but from their miſtakes, ignorance and imprudence. Perhaps it would be too rigid to ſay, that you ought never to ſpeak to a man's prejudice in his abſence, what you would be unwilling to ſay in his preſence. Some exceptions to this rule, might eaſily be conceived. But both prudence and candor require that you ſhould be very reſerved in this reſpect, and either adhere ſtrictly to the rule, or be ſure that good reaſons will juſtify a departure from it.

This will be a very proper place to give you ſome directions, as to the moſt proper conduct, when you ſuffer from the tongues of others. Many and grievous are the complaints of what men ſuffer from the envenomed ſhafts of envy and malice. And there certainly is a ſtrong diſpoſition in ſome to invent, and in many to believe ſlanderous falſehoods. The prevalence of party, in religion or politics, never fails to produce a plentiful crop of this poiſonous weed. One of the moſt important rules upon this ſubject is, that when an accuſation is in any degree well-founded, or ſuſpicious appearances have given any occaſion for it, the firſt duty is to reform what is really wrong, and keep at a diſtance from the diſputed limit.

This will bring good out of evil, and turn an injury into a benefit. But in caſes, as it may often happen, when the ſlander is perfectly groundleſs, I hold it to be

in general the beſt way wholly to deſpiſe it. Time and the power of truth, will of themſelves do juſtice in almoſt every caſe of this kind; but if you ſhew an impatience under it, a diſpoſition to reſent it, or a ſolicitude to refute it, the far greateſt part of mankind will believe it not the leſs, but the more. If ſlander were a plant or an animal, I would ſay it was of a very ſtrange nature, for that it would very eaſily die, but could not eaſily be killed. It diſcovers a greatneſs of mind, and a conſcious dignity, to deſpiſe ſlanders, which of itſelf commands reſpect; whereas to be either offended or diſtreſſed by them, ſhews a weakneſs not amiable, whether the accuſation be true or falſe.

This rule I do not ſay is wholly without exception. There may be caſes where vindications may be neceſſary and effectual, but they are not many. And I think I have ſeen in the courſe of my life, reaſon to make the following diſtinction. If the accuſation or ſlander be ſpecial, and relate to a particular fact, fixed by time, place and other circumſtances, and if it be either wholly falſe, or eſſentially miſtaken in its nature and tendency, the matter may be explained, and juſtice may be done. But if it be a general character, that happens to be imputed to a man, he ought to attempt no refutation of it, but by conduct: the more he complains of it, the more he ſpeaks of it, the more he denies it, it will be the more believed. For example, if it be affirmed that a man ſpoke profanely in a certain company, at a certain place and time, when he was not preſent at all, it may be eaſily and completely refuted; but if he is accuſed of being proud, contentious, covetous, or deceitful, although theſe accuſations are pretended to be ſupported by a train of facts, it is better to let them wholly alone, and ſuffer his conduct to ſpeak for itſelf. There are inſtances in hiſtory, of accuſations brought with much plauſibility, and urged with great vehemence, which yet have been either from the beginning diſbelieved, or by time confuted; which occaſioned the Latin proverb, *Magna est veritas et prævalebit.*

All the above-mentioned particulars may be ſaid to be the happy effects of wiſdom and benevolence united; or rather, perhaps, in the light in which they have been ſta-

ted to you, they are chiefly the proper fruits of that wiſdom which is "profitable to direct." But I muſt add another advice, which is the immediate effect of benevolence and good-will; that is, be ready to aſſiſt others, and do good as you have opportunity. As every thing is liable to be abuſed, ſometimes the maxims of prudence take a wrong direction, and cloſe the heart againſt impreſſions of ſympathy and tenderneſs towards others in diſtreſs. Sometimes indeed, the coolneſs and compoſure of ſpirit, and that ſelf-command, which is the effect of reflection and experience, is miſtaken for a callous and unfeeling heart, though it is a very different thing. To give way to the agitation of paſſion, even under the fineſt feelings, is the way to prevent, inſtead of promoting uſefulneſs. A parent overwhelmed with ſurpriſe and anxiety, at a calamitous accident that has befallen a child, ſhall be incapable either of reflection or activity, and ſhall ſometimes even need the aſſiſtance which he ought to give. But independently of this, there are certainly ſome perſons who contract a habit of indifference as to the wants or deſires of others, and are not willing to put themſelves to any inconvenience, unleſs their own particular concerns may be promoted at the ſame time.

In oppoſition to this, I mean to recommend to you a diſpoſition to oblige, not merely by civil expreſſions, and an affable deportment, but by taking a real intereſt in the affairs of others. Be not unwilling to lend your advice, your aſſiſtance, your intereſt, to thoſe that need them. Thoſe who cannot ſpare pecuniary aſſiſtance, may do many acts of valuable friendſhip. Let every neighbor perceive that you are not ready to quarrel needleſsly, nor inſiſt pertinaciouſly on trifles; and if you live to obtain credit and influence, let them be employed to aſſiſt the deſerving of every claſs. If you undertake to do the buſineſs of others, attend to it with the ſame fidelity, and if poſſible, with greater punctuality than you would to your own. Some are ready to excuſe or juſtify a contrary conduct, by complaining of the ingratitude or injuſtice of mankind. But in my opinion, theſe complaints are contrary to truth and experience. There may be many particular

perſons both ungrateful and unjuſt; but in the world in general, there will be found a clearneſs of diſcernment, and an exactneſs of retribution. Our Saviour tells us, with reſpect to one fault, that of raſh judging, what is equally true as to injuries of every kind, "with what mea-"ſure ye mete, it ſhall be meaſured to you again; good "meaſure, preſſed down, and ſhaken together, and run-"ning over, ſhall men give into your boſom." Luke vi. 38.

This, in my opinion, may and ought to be underſtood both ways. As the churliſh Nabal generally meets with his match, ſo perſons of a humane and friendly diſpoſition ſhall reap the fruits of it to them or theirs. The truth is, the diſpoſition itſelf is not in its perfection, but when there is no regard to an immediate return. If you give, looking for a ſpeedy recompenſe, it is not giving, but ſelling. You may, however, ſafely truſt to the promiſe of God: "Caſt "thy bread upon the waters, for thou ſhalt find it after ma-"ny days." Eccl. xi. 1.

I have known many inſtances of kindneſſes that were both remembered and requited, after they had been long forgotten by him who beſtowed them. Nay, ſometimes they may be repaid in another generation. It is no inconſiderable legacy for a man to leave to his children, that he had always been a friend to others, and never refuſed his aſſiſtance to thoſe who ſtood in need of it.

It will not be an improper place here to introduce a few words upon a ſubject, which has been often handled by writers of the firſt claſs: I mean private friendſhip. Some writers againſt religion, have actually made it an objection againſt Chriſtianity, that it does not recommend private friendſhip, or the love of our country. If this were true, it would be no fault, becauſe the univerſal benevolence recommended by the goſpel, includes all private affections, when they are conſiſtent with it, and is far ſuperior to them when they are contrary to it. But in fact, the inſtances of private friendſhip mentioned and alluded to in ſcripture, are a ſufficient recommendation of it; and even our bleſſed Saviour himſelf is ſaid to have diſtinguiſhed the youngeſt of his diſciples with particular affection. I will therefore obſerve, with moſt authors,

that there is no true friendſhip, but what is founded upon virtuous principles, and directed to virtuous purpoſes. To love a perſon who is not worthy of love, is not a virtue, but an error. Neither is there any dependance to be placed in trying caſes, upon perſons unprincipled at bottom. There never was a true friend, who was not an honeſt man. But beſides this important truth, it is further to be obſerved, that there is a ſpecies of friendſhip which is neither founded on virtue nor vice, but mere weakneſs of mind. Some perſons, having no reſources in themſelves, are obliged to have recourſe to ſome other, upon whom they may lean, and without whom they ſeem as if they could neither think, act, nor even exiſt. This ſort of friendſhip is to be ſeen particularly in princes and perſons of high rank, and is generally called favoritiſm; but the ſame thing may be obſerved in all ranks, though, in the lower, it is not ſo conſpicuous. We may ſay of it, that it is like ſome of thoſe plants that are falſe and ſpurious in their kind, which have ſome of the appearances, but want the moſt valuable and eſſential qualities of thoſe that are genuine. Such friendſhips are commonly contracted by caprice or accident, and uncertain in their duration, being liable to be diſſolved by the ſame means. Valuable friendſhip is the reſult of judgment as well as affection; it is one of the greateſt comforts of life as well as one of the greateſt ornaments to human nature, and its genuineneſs may be diſcerned by the following mark: that though it is particular, it is not excluſive. When there is a great, but virtuous attachment to a perſon who deſerves it, it will make a man not leſs, but more friendly to all others, as opportunity or circumſtances ſhall call him to ſerve them.

You will perhaps be ſurpriſed that as I have ſo often expreſſed a deſire of your being accompliſhed in every reſpect, that I have heretofore ſaid nothing or but little on that politeneſs and grace in behaviour, which is ſo much talked of, and which, in ſome late writings, has been ſo highly extolled. What has been already explained to you, I hope will lay the foundation for the moſt ſolid, valuable and durable politeneſs. Think of others as rea-

ſon and religion require you, and treat them as it is your duty to do, and you will not be far from a well-poliſhed behaviour. As to any thing further, that is external in mode and propriety of carriage, it can never be learned but by intercourſe with the beſt company. As to the writings above referred to, the chief of which are Rochefoucault's Maxims, and Cheſterfield's Letters. I think of them as of many other free writings, that when viewed properly, that may be as uſeful, as by being viewed otherwiſe, they are generally pernicious. They contain a digeſted ſyſtem of hypocriſy, and betray ſuch pride and ſelf-ſufficiency, and ſuch hatred or contempt of mankind, as may well be an antidote againſt the poiſon which they mean to convey. Nay, one would think the publication of ſuch ſentiments is ridiculous, becauſe it is telling you that they deſire to be polite, and at the ſame time that this politeneſs conſiſts in taking you by the weak ſide, and diſplaying their own addreſs by over-reaching yours.

I muſt alſo obſerve, that ſuch writers give in general, a very unjuſt as well as diſhonorable view of nature and mankind. I remember, indeed, Dean Swift ſays,

" As Rochefoucault his maxims drew
" From nature, I believe them true."

What muſt I ſay to this? Shall I ſay that he did not draw his maxims from nature? I will not, becauſe I think he did. Am I obliged then to admit them to be true? By no means. It is nature, but it is juſt ſuch a view of nature, as a man without principle muſt take. It is in himſelf, that all the error and exaggeration is to be found.

Thoſe who diſcover an univerſal jealouſy, and indiſcriminate contempt for mankind in general, give very little reaſon to think well of themſelves. Probably men are neither ſo good as they pretend, nor ſo bad as they are often thought to be. At any rate, candour in ſentiment as well as conduct, as it is an important duty of religion, ſo it is a wiſe maxim for the conduct of life; and I believe theſe two things are very ſeldom if ever found either ſeparate from, or oppoſed to each other.

The laſt advice that I ſhall offer you, is to preſerve a ſacred and inviolable regard to ſincerity and truth. Thoſe who have received their education here, or at leaſt who have completed it, muſt know how much pains have been taken to eſtabliſh the univerſal and unalterable obligation of truth. This is not however mentioned now to introduce the general ſubject, or to ſhew the guilt, folly and danger of deliberate intereſted falſhood, but to warn you againſt the ſmaller breaches of truth now ſo very common, ſuch as want of punctuality in appointments, breach of promiſe in ſmall matters, officious falſhoods, that is, deceiving children, ſick perſons or others for their good; jocular deceptions, which are not intended to continue long, or be materially hurtful to others. Not one of theſe is without ſin before God, and they are much more hurtful than is commonly ſuppoſed. So very ſacred a thing indeed is truth, that the very ſhadow of departure from it is to be avoided. Suppoſe a man only to expreſs his preſent purpoſe as to futurity, for example, to ſay he will go to ſuch a place to-morrow, though there is no proper obligation given, nor any right to require performance, yet if he does ſo ſoften, he will acquire the character of levity and unſteadineſs, which will operate much to his diſadvantage. Let me therefore recommend to you a ſtrict, univerſal and ſcrupulous regard to truth—It will give dignity to your character—it will put order into your affairs; it will excite the moſt unbounded confidence, ſo that whether your view be your own intereſt, or the ſervice of others, it promiſes you the moſt aſſured ſucceſs. I am alſo perſuaded, that there is no virtue that has a more powerful influence upon every other, and certainly, there is none by which you can draw nearer to God himſelf, whoſe diſtinguiſhing character is, that he will not, and he cannot lie.

A SERIOUS

INQUIRY

INTO THE

NATURE AND EFFECTS

OF THE

STAGE;

Being an attempt to show, that contributing to the support of a public theatre, is inconsistent with the character of a Christian.

THE reader will probably conjecture, and therefore I do readily acknowledge, that what gave occaſion both to the writing, and publiſhing the enſuing treatiſe, was the new tragedy of Douglas, lately acted in the theatre at Edinburgh. This, univerſal uncontradicted fame ſays, is the work of a miniſter of the church of Scotland. One of that character and office employing his time in writing for the ſtage, every one will allow, is a very new and extraordinary event. In one reſpect neither author nor actors have ſuffered any thing from this circumſtance: for doubtleſs, it contributed its ſhare in procuring that run upon the repreſentation, which continued for ſeveral days. Natural curioſity prompted many to make trial, whether there was any difference

between a play written by a clergyman, and one of another author. And a concern of the fate of such a person excited the zeal and diligence of friends, to do all in their power to procure a full house, that the bold adventurer might be treated with respect and honor.

Some resolutions of the presbytery of Edinburgh seem to threaten, that public notice will be taken of this author and his associates by their superiors in the church. Whether this will be carried on, and if it be, whether they will be approved or censured; and if the last, to what degree, I pretend not to foretel. But one thing is certain, that it hath been, and will be, the subject of much thought and conversation among the laity of all ranks, and that it must have a very great influence upon the state of religion among us, in this part of the nation. That this influence will be for the better, though I resolve to examine the subject with all impartiality, I confess, I see little ground to hope. There is no doubt that it will be condemned by the great plurality of those who go by the appellation of the stricter sort. With them, it will bring a great reproach upon the church of Scotland, as containing one minister who writes for the stage, and many who think it no crime to attend the representation. It is true, no other consequences are to be apprehended from their displeasure, than the weakest of them being provoked to unchristian resentment, or tempted to draw rash and general conclusions from the conduct of a few to the character of the whole, or perhaps some of them separating from the established church, none of which effects of late have been much either feared or shunned. However, even on this account, it were to be wished, either that it had never happened, or that it could be shewn, to the conviction of unprejudiced minds, that it was a just and commendable action.

But, to be sure, the chief danger is, that in case it be really a bad thing, it must give very great offence, in the Scripture sense of that word, to those who are most apt to take it, viz. such as have least religion, or none at all. An offence is a stumbling-block over which the weak and unstedfast are in danger of falling; that is

to ſay, it emboldens them to commit, and hardens them in the practice of ſin. Now, if the ſtage is unlawful or dangerous to a Chriſtian, thoſe who are by inclination ſo addicted to it that it is already difficult to convince them of their error, muſt be greatly confirmed in this error, by the example and countenance of ſuch as call themſelves miniſters of Chriſt. It has accordingly already occaſioned more diſcourſe among the gay part of the world, in defence or commendation of the ſtage, than paſt perhaps for ſome years preceding this event.

Nothing therefore can be more ſeaſonable at this time, or neceſſary for the public good, than a careful and accurate diſcuſſion of this queſtion, whether ſupporting and encouraging ſtage-plays, by writing, acting, or attending them, is conſiſtent, or inconſiſtent, with the character of a Chriſtian? It is to no purpoſe to confine the inquiry to this. Whether a miniſter is not appearing in an improper light, and miſapplying his time and talents when he dedicates them to the ſervice of the ſtage? That point would probably be given up by moſt, and thoſe who would deny it do not merit a confutation. But if the matter is reſted here, it will be conſidered only as a ſmaller miſdemeanor, and though treated, or even condemned as ſuch, it will ſtill have the bad effect (upon ſuppoſition of theatrical amuſements being wrong and ſinful) of greatly promoting them, though we ſeem to be already as much given to them as even worldly conſiderations will allow.

The ſelf-denying apologies common with authors, of their being ſenſible of their unfitneſs for the taſk they undertake, their doing it to ſtir up a better hand, and ſo on, I wholly paſs, having never read any of them with approbation. Prudence is good, and I would not willingly loſe ſight of it, but zeal and concern for the glory of God, and faithfulneſs to the ſouls of others, are duties equally neceſſary in their place, but much more rare. How far I am ſenſible of my own unfitneſs for treating this ſubject, and of the reputation that is riſked by attempting it, the world is not obliged to believe upon my own teſtimony; but in whatever degree it be, it is greatly overbalanced at preſent, by a view of the declining ſtate of religion a-

mong us, the prevalence of national ſins, and the danger of deſolating judgments.

It is ſome diſcouragement in this attempt, that it is very uncertain whether many of thoſe, for whoſe ſakes it is chiefly intended, and who ſtand moſt in need of information upon the ſubject, will take the pains to look into it. Such a levity of ſpirit prevails in this age, that very few perſons of faſhion will read or conſider any thing that is written in a grave or ſerious ſtyle. Whoever will look into the monthly catalogues of books, publiſhed in Britain for ſome years paſt, may be convinced of this at one glance. What an immenſe proportion do romances, under the titles of lives, adventures, memoirs, hiſtories, &c. bear to any other ſort of production in this age? Perhaps therefore it may be thought that it would have been more proper to have gratified the public taſte, by raiſing up ſome allegorical ſtructure, and handling this ſubject in the way of wit and humor; eſpecially as it ſeems to be a modern principle, that ridicule is the teſt of truth, and as there ſeems to be ſo large a fund for mirth, in the character of a ſtage-playing prieſt. But, though I deny not the lawfulneſs of uſing ridicule in ſome caſes, or even its propriety here, yet I am far from thinking it is the teſt of truth. It ſeems to be more proper for correction than for inſtruction; and though it may be fit enough to whip an offender, it is not unuſual, nor unſuitable, firſt to expoſtulate a little with him, and ſhew him that he deſerves it. Beſides, every man's talent is not equally fit for it, and indeed, now the matter ſeems to have been carried beyond a jeſt, and to require a very ſerious conſideration.

There is alſo, beſides ſome diſcouragement, a real difficulty in entering on this diſquiſition. It will be hard to know in what manner to reaſon, or on what principles to build. It were eaſy to ſhow the unlawfulneſs of ſtage-plays, by ſuch arguments as would appear concluſive to thoſe who already hate both them and their ſupporters: but it is not ſo eaſy to make it appear to thoſe who chiefly frequent them, becauſe they will both applaud and juſtify ſome of the very things that others look upon as the worſt effects of the practice, and will deny the very principles

on which they are condemned. The truth is, it is our having different views of the nature of religion, that cauſes different opinions upon this ſubject. For many ages there was no debate upon it at all. There were players, but they did not pretend to be Chriſtians themſelves, and they had neither countenance nor ſupport from any who did. Whereas now, there are abundance of advocates for the lawfulneſs, ſome for the uſefulneſs, of plays; not that the ſtage is become more pure, but that Chriſtians are become leſs ſo, and have lowered the ſtandard or meaſure requiſite to attain and preſerve that character.

But there is ſtill another difficulty, that whoever undertakes to write againſt plays, though the provocation is given by what they are, is yet always called upon to attack them, not as they are, but as they might be. A writer on this ſubject is actually reduced to the neceſſity of fighting with a ſhadow, of maintaining a combat with an ideal or imaginary ſort of drama, which never yet exiſted, but which the defenders of the cauſe form by way of ſuppoſition, and which ſhall appear, in fact, in that happy future age, which ſhall ſee, what theſe gentlemen are pleaſed to ſtyle, a well regulated ſtage. However little ſupport may ſeem to be given by this to a vicious and corrupted ſtage there is no attender of plays but, when he hears this chimera defended, imagines it is his own cauſe that is eſpouſed, and with great compoſure and ſelf-ſatisfaction, continues his practice. A conduct not leſs abſurd, than if one who was expreſsly aſſured a certain diſh of meat before him was poiſoned, ſhould anſwer thus, All meat is not poiſoned, and therefore I may eat this with ſafety.

It is very plain, that were men but ſeriouſly diſpoſed, and without prejudice deſiring the knowledge of their duty, it would not be neceſſary, in order to ſhow the unlawfulneſs of the ſtage, as it now is, to combat it in its imaginary reformed ſtate. Such a reformation, were not men by the prevalence of vicious and corrupt affections, in love with it, even in its preſent condition, would have been long ago given up as a hopeleſs and vi-

ſionary project, and the whole trade or employment deteſted, on account of the abuſes that had always adhered to it. But ſince all advocates for the ſtage have and do ſtill defend it in this manner, by forming an idea of it ſeparate from its evil qualities; ſince they defend it ſo far with ſucceſs, that many who would otherwiſe abſtain, do, upon this very account, allow themſelves in attending the theatre ſometimes, to their own hurt and that of others; and, as I am convinced on the moſt mature deliberation, that the reaſon why there never was a well regulated ſtage, in fact, is becauſe it cannot be, the nature of the thing not admitting of it; I will endeavor to ſhew, that PUBLIC THEATRICAL REPRESENTATIONS, either tragedy or comedy, are, in their general nature or in their beſt poſſible ſtate, unlawful, contrary to the purity of our religion; and that writing, acting or attending them, is inconſiſtent with the character of a Chriſtian. If this be done with ſucceſs, it will give great weight to the reflections which ſhall be added upon the aggravation of the crime, conſidering the circumſtances that at preſent attend the practice.

But, though I have thus far complied with the unreaſonable terms impoſed by the advocates for this amuſement, they muſt not proceed to any higher demand, nor expect, becauſe they have prevailed to have plays conſidered in the way that they themſelves deſire, that therefore the ſame thing muſt be done by religion, and that it muſt be lowered down to the deſcriptions they are ſometimes pleaſed to give of it. I will by no means attack plays upon the principles of modern relaxed morality. In that caſe, to be ſure, it would be a loſt cauſe. If ſome late writers on the ſubject of morals be permitted to determine what are the ingredients that muſt enter into the compoſition of a good man, that good man, it is agreed, may much more probably be found in the play-houſe than in any other place. But what belongs to the character of a Chriſtian muſt be taken from the holy Scriptures, the word of the living God. Notwithſtanding therefore, that through the great degeneracy of the age, and very culpable relaxation of diſcipline, not

a few continue to be called Chriſtians, who are a reproach to the name, and ſupport and countenance one another in many practices contrary to the purity of the Chriſtian profeſſion, I ſhall beg leave ſtill to recur to the unerring ſtandard, and to conſider, not what many nominal Chriſtians are, but what every real Chriſtian ought to be.

In ſo doing I think I ſhall reaſon juſtly; and at the ſame time it is my reſolution, not only to ſpeak the ſenſe, but, as often as poſſible, the very language and phraſes of the Scripture, and of our pious fathers. Theſe are either become venerable to me for their antiquity, or they are much fitter for expreſſing the truths of the goſpel, and delineating the character and duty of a diſciple of Chriſt, than any that have been invented in later times. As the growth or decay of vegetable nature is often ſo gradual as to be inſenſible; ſo in the moral world, verbal alterations, which are counted as nothing, do often introduce real changes, which are firmly eſtabliſhed before their approach is ſo much as ſuſpected. Were the ſtyle, not only of ſome modern eſſays, but of ſome modern ſermons, to be introduced upon this ſubject, it would greatly weaken the argument, though no other alteration ſhould be made. Should we every where put virtue for holineſs, honor, or even moral ſenſe for conſcience, improvement of the heart for ſanctification, the oppoſition between ſuch things and theatrical entertainments would not appear half ſo ſenſible.

By taking up the argument in the light now propoſed, I am ſaved, in a great meaſure, from the repetition of what has been written by other authors on the ſubject. But let it be remembered, that they have clearly and copiouſly ſhewn the corruption and impurity of the ſtage and its adherents, ſince its firſt inſtitution, and that both in the heathen and Chriſtian world. They have made it undeniably appear, that it was oppoſed and condemned by the beſt and wiſeſt men, both heathens and Chriſtians in every age*. Its very defenders do all pretend to

* Particularly at Athens, where it firſt had its birth, both tragedy and comedy were ſoon aboliſhed by public authority; and among the Romans, though this and other public ſhows

blame the abuſe of it. They do indeed alledge that this abuſe is not eſſential to it, but may be ſeparated from it; however, all of them, ſo far as I have ſeen, repreſent this ſeparation as only poſſible or future; they never attempt to aſſign any æra in which it could be defended as it then was, or could be affirmed to be more profitable than hurtful. Some writers do mention a few particular plays of which they give their approbation. But theſe have never yet, in any age or place, amounted to ſuch a number, as to keep one ſociety of players in conſtant employment, without a mixture of many more that are confeſſedly pernicious. The only reaſon of bringing this in view at preſent when it is not to be inſiſted on, is, that it ought to procure a fair and candid hearing to this attempt to prove, That the ſtage, after the greateſt improvement of which it is capable, is ſtill inconſiſtent with the purity of the Chriſtian profeſſion. It is a ſtrong preſumptive evidence in favor of this aſſertion, that, after ſo many years trial, ſuch improvement has never actually taken place.

were permitted in a certain degree, yet ſo cautious were that wiſe people of ſuffering them to be frequent, that they did not permit any public theatre, when occaſionally erected, to continue above a certain number of days. Even that erected by M. Scaurus, which is ſaid to have coſt ſo immenſe a ſum as a million ſterling, was ſpeedily taken down. Pompey the Great was the firſt who had power and credit enough to get a theatre continued.

The opinion of Seneca may be ſeen in the following paſſage: —"Nihil eſt tam damnoſum bonis moribus, quam in aliquo "ſpectaculo deſidere. Tunc enim per voluptatem facilius vitia "ſurrepunt."

As to the primitive Chriſtians, ſee Conſtit. Apoſt. lib. 8. cap. 32. where actors and ſtage-players are enumerated among thoſe who are not to be admitted to baptiſm. Many different councils appoint that they ſhall renounce their arts before they be admitted, and if they return to them ſhall be excommunicated. Tertullian de Spectaculis, cap. 22. obſerves, That the heathens themſelves marked them with infamy, and excluded them from all honors and dignity. To the ſame purpoſe ſee Aug. de Civ. Dei. lib. 2. cap. 14. "Actores poeticarum fabu-"larum removent a ſocietate civitatis—ab honoribus omnibus "repellunt homines ſcenicos."

The opinion of moderns is well known, few Chriſtian writers of any eminence having failed to pronounce ſentence againſt the ſtage.

It is perhaps alſo proper here to obviate a pretence, in which the advocates of the ſtage greatly glory, that there is no expreſs prohibition of it to be found in ſcripture. I think a countryman of our own* has given good reaſons to believe, that the apoſtle Paul, in his epiſtle to the Epheſians, chap. v. ver. 4. by "filthineſs, fooliſh talking and "jeſting," intended to prohibit the plays that were then in uſe. He alſo thinks it probable, that the word *Komois* uſed in more places than one, and tranſlated "revelling," points at the ſame thing. Whether his conjectures are juſt or not, it is very certain that theſe, and many other paſſages, forbid the abuſes of the ſtage; and if theſe abuſes be inſeparable from it, as there is reaſon to believe, there needed no other prohibition of them to every Chriſtian. Nay, if they never had been ſeparated from it till that time, it was ſufficient: and it would be idle to expect that the ſcripture ſhould determine this problematical point, Whether they would ever be ſo in any after age. To aſk that there ſhould be produced a prohibition of the ſtage, as a ſtage, univerſally, is to preſcribe to the Holy Ghoſt, and to require that the ſcripture ſhould not only forbid ſin, but every form in which the reſtleſs and changeable diſpoſitions of men ſhall think fit to be guilty of it, and every name by which they ſhall think proper to call it. I do not find in ſcripture any expreſs prohibition of maſquerades, routs and drums; and yet I have not the leaſt doubt, that the aſſemblies called by theſe names, are contrary to the will of God, and as bad, if not worſe, than the common and ordinary entertainments of the ſtage.

In order to make this inquiry as exact and accurate as poſſible, and that the ſtrength or weakneſs of the arguments on either ſide, may be clearly perceived, it will be proper to ſtate diſtinctly, what we underſtand by the ſtage, or ſtage-plays, when it is affirmed, that in their moſt improved and beſt regulated ſtate, they are unlawful to Chriſtians. This is the more neceſſary, that there is a great indiſtinctneſs and ambiguity in the language uſed by thoſe

* The late Mr. Anderſon.

who, in writing or conversation, undertake to defend it. They analyze and divide it into parts, and take sometimes one part, sometimes another, as will best suit their purpose. They ask, What there can be unlawful in the stage abstractedly considered? Comedy is exposing the folly of vice, and pointing out the ridiculous part of every character. And is not this commendable? Is not ridicule a noble means of discountenancing vice? And is not the use of it warranted by the satire and irony that is to be found in the holy scriptures? Tragedy, they say, is promoting the same end in a way more grave and solemn. It is a moral lecture, or a moral picture, in which virtue appears to great advantage. What is history itself, but representing the characters of men as they actually were, and plays represent them as they may be. In their perfection, plays are as like history and nature, as the poet's art and actor's skill can make them. Is it then the circumstance of their being written in dialogue, that renders them criminal? Who will pretend that? Is it that they are publicly repeated or acted over? Will any one pretend, that it is a crime to personate a character in any case, even where no deceit is intended? Then farewel parables, figures of speech, and the whole oratorial art. Is it a sin to look upon the representation? Then it must be a sin to look upon the world, which is the original, of which plays are the copy.

This is the way which those who appear in defence of the stage ordinarily take, and it is little better than if one should say, What is a stage-play? It is nothing else abstractedly considered but a company of men and women talking together; Where is the harm in that? What hinders them from talking piously and profitably, as well as wickedly or hurtfully? But, rejecting this method of reasoning as unjust and inconclusive, let it be observed, that those who plead for the lawfulness of the stage in any country, however well regulated, plead for what implies, not by accident, but essentially and of necessity the following things. (1.) Such a number of plays as will furnish an habitual course of representations, with such changes as the love of variety in human nature necessarily

requires. (2.) Theſe plays of ſuch a kind, as to procure an audience of voluntary ſpectators, who are able and willing to pay for being ſo entertained. (3.) A company of hired players, who have this as their only buſineſs and occupation, that they may give themſelves wholly to it, and be expert in the performance. (4.) The repreſentation muſt be ſo frequent as that the profits may defray the expenſe of the apparatus, and maintain thoſe who follow this buſineſs. They muſt alſo be maintained in that meaſure of luxury, or elegance, if you pleaſe, which their way of life, and the thoughts to which they are accuſtomed muſt make them deſire and require. It is a thing impracticable to maintain a player at the ſame expenſe as you may maintain a peaſant.

Now all theſe things do, and muſt enter into the idea of a well regulated ſtage; and, if any defend it without ſuppoſing this, he hath no adverſary that I know of. Without theſe there may be poets, or there may be plays, but there cannot be a play-houſe. It is in vain then to go about to ſhow, that there have been an inſtance or two, or may be, of treatiſes wrote in the form of plays, that are unexceptionable. It were eaſy to ſhew very great faults in ſome of thoſe moſt univerſally applauded, but this is unneceſſary. I believe it is very poſſible to write a treatiſe in the form of a dialogue, in which the general rules of the drama are obſerved, which ſhall be as holy and ſerious, as any ſermon that ever was preached or printed. Neither is there any apparent impoſſibility in getting different perſons to aſſume the different characters, and rehearſe it in ſociety. But it may be ſafely affirmed, that if all plays were of that kind, and human nature to continue in its preſent ſtate, the doors of the play-houſe would ſhut of their own accord, becauſe nobody would demand acceſs;* unleſs there were an act of parliament to force attendance, and even in that caſe, as much pains would

* This furniſhes an eaſy anſwer to what is remarked by ſome in favor of plays, that ſeveral eminent Chriſtians have endeavored to ſupplant bad plays by writing good ones; as Gregory Nazienzen, a father of the church, and a perſon of great piety, and our countryman Buchanan. But did ever theſe plays

probably be taken to evade the law obliging to attend, as are now taken to evade thoſe that command us to abſtain. The fair and plain ſtate of this queſtion then is, Whether it is poſſible or practicable in the preſent ſtate of human nature, to have the above ſyſtem of things under ſo good a regulation, as to make the erecting and countenancing the ſtage agreeable to the will of God, and conſiſtent with the purity of the Chriſtian profeſſion.

And here let us conſider a little what is the primary, and immediate intention of the ſtage, Whether it be for amuſement and recreation, or for inſtruction to make men wiſe and good. Perhaps, indeed, the greateſt part will chooſe to compound theſe two purpoſes together, and ſay it is for both: for amuſement immediately, and for improvement ultimately, that it inſtructs by pleaſing, and reforms by ſtealth. The patrons of a well regulated ſtage have it no doubt in their power to profeſs any of theſe ends in it they pleaſe, if it is equally capable of them all; and therefore in one part or other of this diſcourſe, it muſt be conſidered in every one of theſe lights. But as it is of moment, becauſe of ſome of the arguments to be afterwards produced, let the reader be pleaſed to conſider, how far recreation and amuſement enter into the nature of the ſtage, and are, not only immediately and primarily, but chiefly and ultimately, intended by it.

If the general nature of it, or the end propoſed from it when well regulated, can be any way determined from its firſt inſtitution, and the ſubſequent practice, it ſeems plainly to point at amuſement. The earlieſt productions of that kind that are now extant, are evidently incapable of any other uſe, and hardly even of that to a perſon of any taſte or judgment.* They uſually accompanied the

come into repute? Were they formerly, or are they now acted upon the ſtage? the fate of their works proves that theſe good men judged wrong in attempting to reform the ſtage, and that the great majority of Chriſtians acted more wiſely who were for laying it wholly aſide.

* This is confeſſed by a defender of the ſtage, who ſays, "Such of the comedies before his (that is Menander's) time, "as have been preſerved to us, are generally very poor pieces,

feaſts of the ancients in the houſes of the rich and opulent*, and were particularly uſed in times of public rejoicing. They have indeed generally been conſidered, in all ages, as intended for entertainment. A modern author of high rank and reputation†, who would not willingly hurt the cauſe, conſiders them in this light, and this alone, and repreſents their improvement, not as lying in their having a greater moral tendency, but in the perfection of the poet's art, and the refinement of the taſte of the audience. It is only of late that men have begun to dignify them with a higher title. Formerly they were ever conſidered as an indulgence of pleaſure, and an article of luxury, but now they are exalted into ſchools of virtue, and repreſented as bulwarks againſt vice. It is probable, moſt readers will be apt to ſmile when they hear them ſo called, and to ſay to their defenders, This is but overdoing, preſerve them to us as innocent amuſements, and we ſhall not much contend for their uſefulneſs. It is indeed but an evidence of the diſtreſs of the cauſe for their advocates only take up this plea when they are unable to anſwer the arguments againſt them upon any other footing. It may alſo appear that they are deſigned for amuſement, if we conſider who have been the perſons in all ages who have attended them, viz. the rich, the young, and the gay, thoſe who live in pleaſure, and the very buſineſs of whoſe lives is amuſement.

But not to inſiſt on theſe circumſtances, I think it is plain from the nature of the thing, that the immediate intention of plays is to pleaſe, whatever effects may be pretended to flow afteawards, or by accident, from this

" not ſo much ludicrous as ridiculous, even a mountebank's " merry andrew would be hiſſed, now a days, for ſuch pueri- " lities as we ſee abounding in Ariſtophanes." Rem. on Anderſon's Poſitions concerning the unlawfulneſs of ſtage-plays, page 8th.

* Plut. de Glor. Athen. & Sympoſ. lib. 7. queſt. 8. " As " for the new comedy, it is ſo neceſſary an ingredient of all " public entertainments, that ſo to ſpeak, one may as well make a feaſt without wine, as without Menander."

† Shaftſbury.

pleaſure. They conſiſt in an exact imitation of nature, and the conformity of the perſonated to real characters. This is the great aim, and the great perfection, both of the poet and of the actors. Now this imitation, of itſelf, gives great pleaſure to the ſpectator, whether the actions repreſented are good or bad. And, in itſelf conſidered, it gives only pleaſure; for the beauty of the imitation, as ſuch, hath no moral influence, nor any connexion with morality, but what it may derive in a diſtant way from the nature of the actions which the poet or actors chooſe to repreſent, or the ſpectators are willing to ſee. Every perſon who thinks impartially, may be from this convinced, that to pleaſe, or attempt to do ſo, is eſſential to the ſtage, and its firſt, or rather its main deſign; how far it pollutes or purifies is accidental, and muſt depend upon the ſkill and honeſty of its regulators and managers.

Having thus prepared the way, the following arguments are humbly offered to the conſideration of every ſerious perſon, to ſhew, that a public theatre is inconſiſtent with the purity of the Chriſtian profeſſion: which if they do not to all appear to be each of them ſingly concluſive, will I hope, when taken together, ſufficiently evince the truth of the proportion.

In the firſt place. If it be conſidered as an amuſement, it is improper, and not ſuch as any Chriſtian may lawfully uſe. Here we muſt begin by laying it down as a fundamental principle, that all men are bound ſupremely to love, and habitually to ſerve God; that is to ſay, to take his law as the rule, and his glory as the end, not of one, but of all their actions. No man, at any time or place is, nor can be, abſolved from this obligation. Every real Chriſtian lives under an habitual ſenſe of it. I know this expreſſion, aiming, at the glory of God, is called a cant phraſe, and is deſpiſed and derided by worldly men. It were eaſy however, to vindicate it from reaſon; but it will ſuffice, to all thoſe for whoſe uſe this diſcourſe is intended, to ſay, it is a truth taught and repeated in the ſacred oracles, that all things were made for, that all things ſhall finally tend to, and therefore, that all intelli-

gent creatures ſhould ſupremely and uniformly aim at the glory of God.

Now, we glorify God by cultivating holy diſpoſitions, and doing pious and uſeful actions. Recreation is an intermiſſion of duty, and is only neceſſary becauſe of our weakneſs; it muſt be ſome action indifferent in its nature, which becomes lawful and uſeful from its tendency to refreſh the mind, and invigorate it for duties of more importance. The uſe of recreation is preciſely the ſame as the uſe of ſleep; though they differ in this, that there is but one way in which ſleep becomes ſinful, viz. by exceſs, whereas there are ten thouſand ways in which recreations become ſinful. It is needleſs to produce paſſages of Scripture to verify the above aſſertion concerning our obligation to glorify God. It is the language of the whole, and is particularly applied to indifferent actions by the apoſtle Paul, 1 Cor. x. 13. "Whether therefore "ye eat or drink, or whatſoever ye do, do all to the glory "of God."

If there were on the minds of men in general, a juſt ſenſe of this their obligation, ſtage-plays, nay, and a thouſand other amuſements now in uſe, would never have been heard of. The truth is, the need of amuſement is much leſs than people commonly apprehend, and, where it is not neceſſary, it muſt be ſinful. Thoſe who ſtand in need of recreation may be divided into two ſorts, ſuch as are employed in bodily labor, and ſuch as have their ſpirits often exhauſted by ſtudy and application of mind. As to the firſt of theſe, a mere ceſſation from labor is ſufficient for refreſhment, and indeed of itſelf gives great pleaſure, unleſs when the appetites are inflamed and irritated by frequent ſenſual gratifications; and then they are importunately craved, and become neceſſary to fill the intervals of work. Of this ſort very few are able to afford ſo expenſive a recreation as the ſtage. And even as to the other, viz. thoſe whoſe ſpirits are exhauſted by application of mind, only a very ſmall number of them will chuſe the diverſion of the ſtage, for this very good reaſon, that ſocial converſe and bodily exerciſe, will anſwer the purpoſe much better.

Indeed, if we conſider the juſt and legitimate end of recreations, and compare it with the perſons who moſt frequently engage in them, we ſhall find, that ninety-nine of every hundred are ſuch as do not need recreation at all. Perhaps their time lies heavy upon their hands, and they feel an uneaſineſs and impatience under their preſent ſtate; but this is not from work, but from idleneſs, and from the emptineſs and unſatisfying nature of the enjoyments, which they chaſe with ſo much eagerneſs, one after another, vainly ſeeking from them that good which they do not contain, and that ſatisfaction which they cannot impart.

From this I think it undeniably appears, that if no body were to attend the ſtage, but ſuch as really needed recreation or amuſement, upon Chriſtian principles, and of theſe ſuch only as were able to pay for it, and of theſe only ſuch as did themſelves chuſe it, there is not a place this day in the world ſo large as to afford a daily audience. It will be immediately objected, This argument, make as much of it as you pleaſe, is not complete, for it hinders not but that ſome, however few, may attend in a proper manner, and with warrantable views. But let it be remembered, that I attack not a play ſingly as a play, nor one perſon for being a witneſs to a thing of that nature, but the ſtage as a ſyſtem containing all the branches I have enumerated above. This cannot ſubſiſt without a full audience, and frequent attendance; and therefore is, by its conſtitution, a conſtant and powerful invitation to ſin, and cannot be maintained but by the commiſſion of it. Perhaps ſome will ſtill object, that this argument is too finely ſpun, that it ſeems to demand perfection, and to find fault with every practice, in which there is a probability that ſin will be committed. That, if this holds, we ſhould no more contribute to the eſtabliſhment of churches than play-houſes, becauſe we have a moral certainty, that no congregation ever will meet together on earth, but much ſin will be committed, both by miniſter and people. But there is a great difference between a commanded duty which is attended with ſin by defect, and what is nowhere commanded, which neceſſarily invites to ſin by its

nature, and is in ſubſtance ſinful to the great majority of thoſe who attend it.

But further, the ſtage is an improper, that is to ſay, an unlawful recreation to all without exception, becauſe it conſumes too much time. This is a circumſtance which, however little impreſſion it may make upon thoſe who find their time often a burden, will appear of the greateſt moment to every ſerious Chriſtian. In proportion as any man improves in holineſs of heart, he increaſes in uſefulneſs of life, and acquires a deeper aud ſtronger ſenſe of the worth and value of time. To ſpend an hour unprofitably, appears to ſuch a perſon a greater crime, than to many the commiſſion of groſs ſin. And, indeed it ought to appear very heinous in the eyes of thoſe who believe the repreſentation given by our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, of his own procedure at the day of judgment, "Caſt ye the UNPROFITABLE ſervant into utter darkneſs, where there "ſhall be weeping and wailing, and gnaſhing of teeth." Matt. xxv. 30. Mark this, ye lovers of pleaſure, ye ſons of gaiety and mirth, who imagine you are ſent unto the world for no higher end than your own entertainment; and who, if you are free from, or able any how to palliate your groſſer ſins, never once reflect on the heavy account againſt you of waſted time.

Though there were no other objection againſt the ſtage as a recreation, but this one, it is ſurely faulty. If recreations are only lawful becauſe neceſſary, they muſt ceaſe to be lawful when they are no longer neceſſary. The length and duration of regular comedy and tragedy is already fixed and ſettled by rules of long ſtanding; and, I ſuppoſe, whatever other circumſtance may be confeſſed to need reformation, all men of taſte will agree, that theſe ſhall continue as they are. Now I leave to all who know how much time the preparation for ſuch a public appearance, and the neceſſary attendance, muſt take up, to judge, whether it is not too much to be given to mere recreation.

This holds particularly in the caſe of recreation of mind, between which and bodily exerciſe there is a very great difference. For bodily exerciſe in ſome caſes, for ex-

ample, when the health requires it may be continued for a long time, only for this reaſon, that it may have effects laſting in proportion to the time ſpent in it. But giving the mind to pleaſure by way of recreation muſt be ſhort, or it is certainly hurtful; it gives men a habit of idleneſs and trifling, and makes them averſe from returning to any thing that requires ſerious application. So true is this, and ſo applicable to the preſent caſe, that I could almoſt reſt the whole argument upon it, that no man, who has made the trial, can deliberately and with a good conſcience affirm, that attending plays has added ſtrength to his mind, and warmth to his affections, in the duties of devotion; that it has made him more able and willing to exert his intellectual powers in the graver and more important offices of the Chriſtian life; nay, or even made him more diligent and active in the buſineſs of civil life. On the contrary, it is commonly of ſuch length as to produce a ſatiety and wearineſs of itſelf, and to require reſt and refreſhment to recruit the exhauſted ſpirits, a thing quite abſurd and ſelf-contradictory in what is called a recreation.

But the ſtage is not merely an unprofitable conſumption of time, it is further improper as a recreation, becauſe it agitates the paſſions too violently, and intereſts too deeply, ſo as, in ſome caſes, to bring people into a real, while they behold an imaginary diſtreſs. Keeping in view the end of recreation, will enable us to judge rightly of this. It is to refreſh and invigorate the mind.—Therefore when, inſtead of reſt, which is properly called relaxation of mind, recreations are uſed, their excellence conſiſts in their being, not only a pleaſant, but an eaſy exerciſe of the intellectual powers. Whatever is difficult, and either requires or cauſes a ſtrong application of mind, is contrary to their intention. Now it is plain, that dramatic repreſentations fix the attention ſo very deeply, and intereſt the affections ſo very ſtrongly, that, in a little time, they fatigue the mind themſelves, and however eagerly are they deſired and followed, there are many ſerious and uſeful occupations, in which men will continue lon-

ger, without exhauſting the ſpirits, than in attending the theatre.

Indeed, in this reſpect they are wholly contrary to what ſhould be the view of every Chriſtian. He ought to ſet bounds to, and endeavor to moderate his paſſions as much as poſſible, inſtead of voluntarily and unneceſſarily exciting them. The human paſſions, ſince the fall, are all of them but two ſtrong; and are not ſinful on account of their weakneſs, but their exceſs and miſapplication. This is ſo generally true, that it hardly admits of an exception; unleſs it might be counted an exception, that ſome vicious paſſions, when they gain an aſcendancy, extinguiſh others which oppoſe their gratification. For, though religion is conſiſtent throughout, there are many vices, which are mutually repugnant to, and deſtructive of, each other. But this exception has little or no effect upon the preſent argument.

Now the great care of every Chriſtian, is to keep his paſſions and affections within due bounds, and to direct them to their proper objects. With reſpect to the firſt of theſe, the chief influence of theatrical repreſentations upon the ſpectator, is to ſtrengthen the paſſions by indulgence; for there they are all exhibited in a lively manner, and ſuch as is moſt fit to communicate the impreſſion. As to directing them to their proper objects, it will be afterwards ſhown, that the ſtage has rather the contrary effect; in the mean time, it is ſufficient to obſerve, that it may be done much more effectually, and much more ſafely another way.

This tendency of plays to intereſt the affections, ſhows their impropriety as a recreation on another account. It ſhows that they muſt be exceeding liable to abuſe by exceſs, even ſuppoſing them in a certain degree to be innocent. It is certain there is no life more unworthy of a man, hardly any more criminal in a Chriſtian, than a life of perpetual amuſement, a life where no valuable purpoſe is purſued, but the intellectual faculties wholly employed in purchaſing and indulging ſenſual gratifications. It is alſo certain, that all of us are by nature too much inclined thus to live to ourſelves, and not to God. There-

fore, where recreations are neceſſary, a watchful Chriſtian will particularly beware of thoſe that are inſnaring, and, by being too grateful and delicious, ready to lead to exceſs. This diſcriminating care and caution, is juſt as much the duty of a Chriſtian, as any that can be named. Though it is immediately converſant only about the temptations and incitements to ſin, and not the actual commiſſion of it, it becomes a duty directly binding, both from the command of God, and the neceſſity of the thing itſelf. "Watch and pray, that ye enter not into tempta-"tion," Mat. xxvi. 41. ſays our Saviour to all his diſciples; and elſewhere, "What I ſay unto you, I ſay unto "all, Watch," Mark xiii. 37. And the apoſtle Paul to the ſame purpoſe, "See then that ye walk circum-"ſpectly, not as fools, but as wiſe, redeeming the time "becauſe the days are evil," Eph. v. 15.

If we conſider the light in which the Scripture ſets our preſent ſituation, and the account there given of the weakneſs of human reſolution, the ſame thing will evidently appear to be our duty. It is impoſſible that we can reſiſt the ſlighteſt temptation, but by the aſſiſtance of divine grace. Now how can this be expected, if we put our conſtancy to unneceſſary trials, not only contrary to reaſon, and a prudent regard to our own ſafety, but in the face of an expreſs command of God to be watchful. "Lord, lead us not into temptation," is a petition which we are taught to offer up, by him who knew what was in man. But how much do thoſe act in oppoſition to this, and even in contempt of it, who make temptations to themſelves. And are not ſtage-plays temptations of the ſtrongeſt kind, in which the mind is ſoftened with pleaſure, and the affections powerfully excited? How little reaſon is there to hope that men in the uſe of them will keep within the bounds of moderation? If any expect, in ſuch circumſtances, to be preſerved by divine power, they are guilty of the ſin, which is in Scripture called "tempting God."

It is this very circumſtance, a liableneſs to abuſe by exceſs, that renders many other amuſements alſo ordinarily unlawful to Chriſtians, though, perhaps, in their ge-

neral nature, they cannot be ſhown to be criminal. Thus it is not eaſy to refute the reaſonings, by which ingenious men endeavor to ſhow that games of hazard are not in themſelves ſinful; but by their enticing, inſnaring nature, and the exceſs which almoſt inſeparably accompanies them, there can be no difficulty in pronouncing them highly dangerous, lawful to very few perſons, and in very few caſes. And, if they were as public in their nature as plays, if they required the concurrence of as many operators, and as great a number of perſons to join in them, I could have little ſcruple in affirming, that, in every poſſible caſe, they would be ſinful.

The preceding conſiderations are greatly confirmed by the following, That when plays are choſen as a recreation, for which they are ſo exceedingly improper, it is always in oppoſition to other methods of recreation, which are perfectly fit for the purpoſe, and not liable to any of theſe objections. Where recreations are neceſſary, if there were only one ſort to be had, ſome inconveniencies could not be ſo ſtrong an argument againſt the uſe of them. But where there are different kinds, to prefer thoſe which are leſs, to thoſe which are more fit, muſt needs be ſinful. Such a tenderneſs and circumſpection is indeed, in this age, ſo rare and unuſual, that I am afraid, it will be almoſt impoſſible to fix a ſenſe of its importance upon the mind of the reader: or, if it be done, in any meaſure for a time, the example of a corrupt world, who are altogether void of it, will immediately efface the impreſſion. But, however few may "have ears to hear it," the thing is certain, that as the progreſs of his ſanctification is the ſupreme deſire and care of every Chriſtian, ſo he is continually liable to be ſeduced by temptation, and infected by example; and therefore, from a diſtruſt of his own reſolution, will not voluntarily and unneceſſarily prefer a dangerous to a ſafe amuſement. To prefer a very difficult and doubtful means of attaining any worldly end, to one ſure and eaſy; to prefer a clumſy improper inſtrument, to one perfectly fit for any piece of work, would be reckoned no

ſmall evidence of folly in the affairs of civil life. If one in ſickneſs ſhould chuſe a medicine of a very queſtionable nature of very dangerous and uncertain operation, when he had equal acceſs to one intirely ſafe, of approved reputation and ſuperior efficacy, it would be eſteemed next to madneſs. Is there not then a real conformity between the caſes? Is not a like care to be taken of our ſouls as of our bodies? Nay, is not the obligation ſo much the ſtronger, by how much the one is of greater value than the other? The different conduct of men, and their different fate in this reſpect, is well deſcribed by the wiſe man, "Happy is the man that feareth always, but "he that hardeneth his heart ſhall fall into miſchief," Prov. xxviii. 14.

It ought not to be omitted in ſhewing the impropriety of the ſtage as a recreation and amuſement for Chriſtians, that it is coſtly and expenſive, and that this coſt is altogether unneceſſary, ſince the end might be obtained, not only as well, but much better, at a far cheaper rate; perhaps, in moſt caſes, at no expence at all. I know this argument will be treated with great contempt by thoſe who live in affluence, and know no other uſe of riches but to feed their appetites, and make all the reſt of mankind ſubſervient to the gratification of their violent and ungovernable deſires. But though none in this world have any title to hinder them from diſpoſing of their wealth as they pleaſe, they muſt be called to conſider, that they have a maſter in heaven. To him they muſt render an account at the laſt day, and, in this account, the uſe that they make of their riches is not to be excepted. The great have, no doubt, the diſtinguiſhed honor, if they pleaſe to embrace it, of contributing to the happineſs of multitudes under them, and diſpenſing, under God, a great variety of the comforts of this life. But it would abate the envy and impatience of the lower part of the world, and moderate their appetite after riches, if they would conſider, that the more that is committed to them, the more they have to account for. The greateſt and richeſt man on earth hath not any licence in the word of God, for an unneceſſary waſte of his ſubſtance, or con-

ſuming it in unprofitable and hurtful pleaſures; and, under the one or both of theſe characters, that muſt fall, that is laid out upon the ſtage.

Let not any reader, who cannot find a ſatisfying anſwer to theſe objections againſt the ſtage as an unchriſtian amuſement, from the word of God, take the practice of the world as a refuge or ſanctuary, and ſay, This is carrying matters to an extreme; If theſe maxims are rigidly adhered to, you will exclude from the number of Chriſtians, not only the far greater part of mankind, but many otherwiſe of excellent and amiable characters. Though this is the weakeſt of all arguments, it is, perhaps, that which hath of all others the ſtrongeſt effect, and moſt powerfully contributes to ſet people's minds at eaſe in a doubtful or dangerous practice. How hard is it to make men ſenſible of the evil of ſuch ſins as cuſtom authoriſes, and faſhion juſtifies? There is no making them aſhamed of them, becauſe they are common and reputable, and there is no making them afraid of what they ſee done, without ſuſpicion by nmubers on every hand. But is there any reaſon to believe, that the example of others will prove a juſt and valid excuſe for any practice at the judgment ſeat of Chriſt? Will the greatneſs or the number of offenders ſcreen them from his power? Or can that man expect a gracious acceptance with him, who has ſuffered his commands to be qualified by prevailing opinion, and would not follow him farther than the bulk of mankind would bear him company.

I ſhall cloſe the reflections upon this part of the ſubject by obſerving, that there are two general characters of the diſciples of Chriſt, which will appear, if we conſult the ſcriptures, to be eſſential to them, and which ſeem altogether inconſiſtent with theatrical amuſements. The firſt is ſelf-denial and mortification. Though we ſhould not inſiſt upon the particular objections againſt the ſtage, there is ſomething of pomp and gaiety in it, on the beſt poſſible ſuppoſition, that is inconſiſtent with the character of a Chriſtian. The goſpel is the religion of ſinners, who are ſaved from wrath by the rich mercy and free grace of God. The life of ſuch then, muſt be a life of

penitence, humility and mortification. The followers of a crucified Saviour muſt bear the croſs, and tread in the ſame path of ſuffering and ſelf-denial, in which he hath gone before them. In their baptiſmal covenant they renounce the world, by which is not meant ſuch groſs crimes as are a violation of natural light, as well as a tranſgreſſion of the law of God, but that exceſſive attachment to preſent indulgence, which is more properly expreſſed by the pomp and vanity of the world*. It is true there are many precepts in Scripture, which require us to maintain an habitual gratitude and thankful frame of ſpirit, nay, to rejoice in the Lord alway. But there is a great difference between this joy, and that of worldly men; as they do not riſe from the ſame ſource, ſo they cannot poſſibly expreſs themſelves in the ſame way.

* It is not improper here to conſider the ancient form of baptiſm, and what was ſuppoſed by the fathers to be implied in it, Apoſt. Conſt. lib. 7. cap. 41. *apotassomai to satana*, &c. "I renounce ſatan and his works, and his pomps, and his ſervice, "and his angels, and his inventions, and all things that belong "to him, or are ſubject to him." Ambroſ. de Initiatis. Ingreſſus es regenerationis ſacrarium, &c.—"Thou haſt entered into the holy place of regeneration; repeat what you "were there aſked, and recollect what you anſwered. You renounced the devil, and his works, and his world, and his "luxury and pleaſures." Hieron. Com. in Matt. xv. 26. Renuntio tibi diabole, &c. "I renounce thee, ſatan, and thy "pomp, and thy vices, and thy world, which lieth in wickedneſs." And that we may know what they had particularly in view by the pomps of the world which they renounced, they are ſometimes expreſsly ſaid to be the public ſhows. Thus Salvian de Provident. lib. 6. page 197. Quæ eſt enim in baptiſmo, &c. "For what is the firſt profeſſion of a Chriſtian in "baptiſm? What, but that they profeſs to renounce the devil, and his pomps, his ſhows, and his works. Therefore "ſhows and pomps, by our own confeſſion, are the works of "the devil. How, O Chriſtian, wilt thou follow the public "ſhows after baptiſm, which thou confeſſeſt to be the works of "the devil?"

There are ſome who pretend, that Chriſtians were only kept from the ſhows, becauſe they were mixed with idolatrous rites; but it is to be noted, that in the time of Salvian, idolatry was aboliſhed, and the ſhows were no longer exhibited in honor of idol gods. Cyril of Jeruſalem alſo, after idolatry was deſtroyed, continues the charge againſt the ſhows.

Another branch of the Chriſtian temper, between which and theatrical amuſements, there appears a very great oppoſition, is ſpirituality and heavenlineſs of mind. All real Chriſtians are, and account themſelves pilgrims and ſtrangers on the earth, ſet their affections on things above, and have their converſation in heaven. Whatever tends to weaken theſe diſpoſitions, they will carefully avoid, as contrary to their duty and their intereſt. Is not this the caſe with theatrical amuſements? Are they not very delicious to a ſenſual and carnal mind? Do they not excite, gratify, and ſtrengthen theſe affections, which it is moſt the buſineſs of a Chriſtian to reſtrain? Are not the indulgence of worldly pleaſure, and heavenlineſs of mind, mutually deſtructive of each other? This is ſo plain, that anciently thoſe who gave themſelves up to a life of eminent holineſs and piety, uſed to retire wholly from the commerce of the world and the ſociety of men. Though this was wrong in itſelf, and ſoon found to be very liable to ſuperſtitious abuſe, it plainly ſhows how much they err upon the oppoſite ſide, who being called to wean the affections from the world, do yet voluntarily and unneceſſarily indulge themſelves in the moſt delicious and intoxicating pleaſures.

What is offered above, I hope, will ſuffice to ſhow that the ſtage, conſidered ſimply as an entertainment, cannot be lawfully uſed by a Chriſtian. But we muſt now proceed in the ſecond place, To conſider the modern pretence, that it is uſeful and inſtructive; or, to ſpeak in the language of one of its defenders, "A warm incentive to "virtue, and powerful preſervative againſt vice."* The ſame author gives us this account of tragedy: "True tra-"gedy is a ſerious lecture upon our duty, ſhorter than an "epic poem, and longer than a fable, otherwiſe differing "from both only in the method, which is dialogue inſtead "of narration; its province is to bring us in love with "the more exalted virtues, and to create a deteſtation of "the blacker and (humanly ſpeaking) more enormous

* Remarks on Anderſon's Poſitions concerning the unlawfulneſs of ſtage-plays.

" crimes." On comedy he ſays, " an inſinuating mirth " laughs us out of our frailties by making us aſhamed of " them. Thus, when they are well intended, tragedy " and comedy work to one purpoſe, the one manages us " as children, the other convinces us as men."

In order to treat this part of the ſubject with preciſion, I muſt beg the reader to recal to mind the account formerly given of what is implied in the ſtage, even under the beſt poſſible regulation; becauſe, unleſs this be allowed me, I confeſs the argument to be defective. It is not denied, that there may be, and are to be found, in ſome dramatic performances, noble and excellent ſentiments. Theſe indeed are much fewer than is commonly ſuppoſed, as might be ſhewn by an examination of ſome of the moſt celebrated plays. There is a great difference between the ſhining thoughts that are applauded in the world by men of taſte, and the ſolid and profitable truths of religion. However, it is allowed, that there are ſome things to be found in plays, againſt which no juſt objection can be made; and it is eaſy to form an idea of them ſtill more pure than any that do yet exiſt; but the queſtion is, Whether it is poſſible now to find, or reaſonable to hope to find, ſuch a number of pieces, in their prevailing tendency, agreeable to the holineſs and purity of the Chriſtian character, as are neceſſary to ſupport a public theatre? Till this is accompliſhed, all that is done to ſupport the theatre in the mean time, is done to ſupport the intereſt of vice and wickedneſs; whatever it may be in itſelf, and ſingly conſidered. And if ſuch an entire reformation be impoſſible, a partial reformation, or mixing a few good things with it, is not only ineffectual, but hurtful. It makes a bad cauſe a little more plauſible, and therefore the temptation ſo much the more formidable.

There is a diſcourſe of a foreigner of ſome note, in which he exerts all his eloquence in commendation of plays, when uſed in the public ſchools, for the improvement of youth in action and elocution, under the direction of their maſters. As this gentleman was a clergyman, his authority is often uſed on this ſubject. But it ought to be obſerved, that as he was a young man when

he employed his eloquence in this cauſe, ſo, what he ſays, ſtrongly ſupports the propriety of the diſtinction I have laid down. He expreſsly confines the argument to ſuch plays as were repreſented by youths in the ſchools, and rejects with great abhorrence the public ſtage, and ſuch as were acted by mercenary players. Of the laſt ſort he hath the following ſtrong words. "At hic vereor A. ne qui ſint "inter vos qui ex me quærant: Quid agis adoleſcens? "Tune comœdos, Hiſtriones, mimos, ex eloquentiæ ſtu- "dioſis facere paras? Egone? Hiſtriones? Quos? An "viles illos qui in ſcenam prodeunt mercede conducti? "Qui quæſtus cauſa quamlibet perſonam induant? Qui "paſſim per urbes vagantes artem ſuam venalem habent? "Qui, merito, Romano jure, infamia notantur?——Ab- "ſit, a me abſit, ut in hac impietatis ſchola teneros adoleſ- "centium animos eloquentia imbui velim. Quanticun- "que eam facio, tanti tamen non eſt. Satius eſſet balbu- "tire, imo ſatius mutum eſſe, quam non ſine ſummo ani- "mi periculo eloquentiam diſcere*" Which paſſage may be tranſlated thus; "But here I am afraid ſome of "you will be ready to challenge me, and to ſay, what is "this you aim at, young man? Do you intend to make "all who ſtudy eloquence comedians, players, buffoons? "Do I indeed? What ſort of players? Thoſe contempti- "ble wretches, who are hired to come upon the ſtage, "and who for gain will perſonate any character whatever? "Who go about through different cities making merchan- "dize of their art? Who are juſtly marked with infamy "in the Roman law?——Far, far be it from me to pro- "poſe, that the tender minds of youth ſhould be taught "eloquence in this ſchool of impiety. However much "I value it, I value it not at this rate. Better it were "they ſhould ſtammer in ſpeech, nay, better that they "were dumb and incapable of ſpeech, than that they "ſhould learn the art of eloquence, by putting their ſouls "in the moſt imminent danger." Now, whether this au- thor's ſcheme was right or not, I have no occaſion at pre- ſent to debate with him as an adverſary, for he rejects with

* Werenfels Oratio de Comœdiis,

abhorrence the imputation of favoring the cauſe againſt which I plead.

When a public theatre is defended as a means of inſtruction, I cannot help thinking it is of importance to obſerve, that it is a method altogether uncommanded and unauthorized in the word of God. This will probably appear a very weak argument to many, but it will not appear ſo to thoſe who have a firm belief of, and a juſt eſteem for that book of life. Such will not expect, that any method will prove effectually to make men "wiſe unto ſalvation," without the bleſſing of God, and they will hardly be induced to look for this bleſſing upon the ſtage. And let it be remembered, that it is now pleaded for in a higher light, and on a more important account, than merely as an amuſement, viz. as proper to ſupport the intereſt of religion; it ſhould therefore have a poſitive warrant before it be employed in this cauſe, leſt it ſhould meet with the ſame reception that all other human devices will meet with, "Who hath required theſe things at your hands?"

And that none may uſe a deluſory ſort of reaſoning, and ſhift from one pretence to another, ſaying, it becomes a lawful amuſement by its tendency to inſtruct, and an effectual inſtruction by its power to pleaſe at the ſame time; it muſt be obſerved, that a ſinful amuſement is not to be indulged on any pretence whatſoever; for we muſt not "do evil, that good may come." Nay, call it only a dangerous amuſement, even in that caſe, no pretence of poſſible or probable inſtruction (though ſuch a thing were not contrary to the ſuppoſition) is ſufficient to warrant it. Nothing leſs than its being neceſſary, could authoriſe the practice, and that I hope none will be ſo hardy as to affirm.

It can never be affirmed to be neceſſary, without a blaſphemous impeachment of the divine wiſdom. If the holy ſcriptures, and the methods there authoriſed and appointed, are full and ſufficient for our ſpiritual improvement, all others muſt be wholly unneceſſary. And if they are the moſt powerful and the moſt effectual means, no others muſt be ſuffered to come into rivalſhip and competition with them; on the contrary, they muſt be condemned as

wrong, or laid aſide as comparatively weak. The truth is, the ſtage can never be defended on a more untenable footing, than when it is repreſented as having a moral or virtuous, that is to ſay, a pious or religious tendency. What Chriſtian can hear ſuch a plea with patience? Is the "law of the Lord perfect, converting the ſoul? Is it "able to make the man of God perfect, thoroughly furniſh-"ed to every good work?" What then are its defects which muſt be ſupplied by the theatre? Have the ſaints of God, for ſo many ages, been carried ſafely through all the dark and difficult ſteps of their earthly pilgrimage, with his law as a "light to their feet, and a lamp to their path," and yet is it now neceſſary, that they ſhould have additional illumination from a well regulated ſtage? Have there been for ſo long a time paſtors employed, bearing a divine commiſſion? ordinances adminiſtered according divine inſtitution? Have theſe been hitherto effectual for "perfecting the ſaints, for the work of the miniſtry, "and for edifying the body of Chriſt?" And ſhall we not count them among the ſcoffers that were to come in the laſt days, who pretend to open a new commiſſion for the players to aſſiſt? If any ſhall ſay, there needs no divine inſtitution, all men are called to inſtruct one another, "the lips of the righteous ſhould feed many," and this way of the drama is but a mode of the inſtruction we all owe to one another. I anſwer, it is as a mode I attack it. This very mode has been ſhown to be dangerous, nay ſinful, as an amuſement; who then can ſhow its neceſſity, in the ſame mode, for inſtruction or improvement?

If the ſtage be a proper method of promoting the intereſts of religion, then is Satan's kingdom divided againſt itſelf, which he is more cunning than to ſuffer it to be. For whatever debate there be, whether good men MAY attend the theatre, there can be no queſtion at all, that no openly vicious man, is an enemy to it, and that the far greateſt part of them do paſſionately love it. I ſay no OPENLY vicious man; for doubtleſs there may be ſome hypocrites wearing the habit of the Chriſtian pilgrim, who are the very worſt of men, and

yet may ſhew abundance of zeal againſt the ſtage. But nothing is more certain than, that taking the world according to its appearance, it is the worſt part of it that ſhows moſt paſſion for this entertainment, and the beſt that avoids and fears it, than which there can hardly be a worſe ſign of it, as a means of doing good. Whoever believes the following words of our bleſſed Redeemer, will never be perſuaded that poets and actors for the ſtage have received any commiſſion to ſpeak in his name. "My ſheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they "follow me, John x. 27.—A ſtranger will they not fol- "low, but will flee from him, for they know not the "voice of ſtrangers, John x. 5.*

This leads us to obſerve, that the ſtage is not only an improper method of inſtruction, but that all, or the far greateſt number of pieces there repreſented, muſt have, upon the whole, a pernicious tendency. This is evident, becauſe they muſt be to the taſte and reliſh of the bulk of thoſe who attend it. The difficulty of getting good authors for the theatre, I ſhall not inſiſt upon, but whatever the authors are able or willing to do, it is certain, that their productions in fact can riſe no higher in point of purity, than the audience ſhall be willing to

* It is to be obſerved here, to prevent miſtakes, that the argument is founded on the general and prevailing inclination of the greateſt part of each character, and not upon particular inſtances, in many of which it is confeſſed, it will not hold. For, as it is difficult to know the real character of ſome perſons, in whom there are ſome marks and ſigns of true religion, and at the ſame time, ſome ſymptoms of unſoundneſs, ſo it is ſtill more difficult to determine the quality of ſingle actions. Therefore, it is little or no argument that any practice is ſafe or good, becauſe one good man, or one ſuppoſed to be good, has been known to do it; or on the contrary, ill, becauſe one bad man has been known to do it. But as, when we retire further from the limit that divides them, the characters are more clearly and ſenſibly diſtinguiſhed, ſo, whatever practice is paſſionately deſired by wicked men in general, and ſhunned by the good, certainly is of bad tendency. If it were otherwiſe, as ſaid above, "Satan's kingdom would be divided againſt itſelf," and the God "who keepeth covenant and truth for ever," would fail in his promiſe, of "giving" his people "counſel," and "teaching them the way in which they ought to walk."

receive. Their attendance is not conſtrained, but voluntary; nay they pay dearly for their entertainment: and therefore they muſt, and will have it to their taſte. This is a part of the ſubject that merits the particular attention of all who are inclined to judge impartially, and it proves, in the ſtrongeſt manner, the abſurdity of forming chimerical ſuppoſitions of a ſtage ſo regulated, as, inſtead of being hurtful, to promote the intereſt of piety and virtue.

Here let ſome truths be called to mind which are frequently mentioned in the holy Scriptures, but ſeldom recollected, and their conſequences very little attended to. There is a diſtinction often ſtated, both in the old and new Teſtament, between the children of God and the men of the world. Theſe are mixed together in the preſent ſtate, and cannot, in many caſes, be certainly diſtinguiſhed by their outward appearance; yet is there at bottom, not only a real diſtinction of character, but a perfect oppoſition between them, as to the commanding principle of all their actions. And as there is an oppoſition of character between them, ſo there muſt be an oppoſition of intereſts and views. Our bleſſed Redeemer, when he came into the world, was "deſpiſed and "rejected of men;" and he every where tells his diſciples, that they muſt expect no better treatment. Matt. v. 11, 12. "Bleſſed are ye when men ſhall revile "you, and perſecute you, and ſhall ſay all manner of "evil againſt you falſely, for my ſake. Rejoice and be "exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven; "for ſo perſecuted they the prophets that were before "you." And on the other hand, Luke vi. 26. "Wo "unto you when all men ſhall ſpeak well of you, for ſo "did their fathers to the falſe prophets." Again, John xv. 19. "If ye were of the world, the world would love "his own; but becauſe ye are not of the world, but I "have choſen you out of the world, therefore the world "hateth you." His apoſtles ſpeak always in the ſame language: thus the apoſtle Paul, Rom. xii. 2. "And "be not conformed to this world." Nay, he lays it down as an univerſal poſition, 2 Tim. iii. 12. "Yea, and all

" that will live godly in Chriſt Jeſus ſhall ſuffer perſe-
" cution." Now I aſk, Whether thoſe who have a ſtrong and rooted averſion to true holineſs, which is not the character of the ſincere Chriſtian, will voluntarily croud to the theatre, to hear and ſee ſuch performances as breathe nothing but what is agreeable to the pure and uncorrupted word of God? Will thoſe who revile, injure, and perſecute the ſaints themſelves, delight in the ſtage, if honor is there put upon true religion, and pleaſed with that character in the repreſentation which they hate in the original? This would be to expect impoſſibilities. And therefore, while the great majority of thoſe who attend the ſtage are unholy, it is certain, that the plays which they behold with pleaſure, cannot, upon the whole, but have a criminal tendency.

If any alledge, that the poet's art may be a means to make religion amiable to them, I anſwer, that he cannot make it amiable, but by adulteration, by mixing it with ſomething agreeable to their own taſte; and then it is not religion that they admire, but the erroneous, debaſed, and falſe reſemblance of it. Or even ſuppoſing, that, in a ſingle inſtance or two, nothing in ſubſtance ſhould be ſet before them but true religion, and this dreſſed to the very higheſt advantage by the poet's genius and actor's ſkill, there would be little gained: becauſe theſe human arts only would be the object of their admiration, and they would always prefer, and ſpeedily procure, a diſplay of the ſame arts, upon a ſubject more agreeable to their corrupt minds. This indeed, we are not left to gather by way of inference and deduction from other truths, but are expreſsly taught it in the word of God. For " the natural man
" receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they
" are fooliſhneſs unto him, neither can he know them,
" becauſe they are ſpiritually diſcerned." 1 Cor. ii. 14. Experience is a ſtrong proof of this. For if any man will take the pains of making up a ſyſtem of the morality of the ſtage, I do not mean the horrid profanity, and ſcandalous obſcenity, that is to be found in the worſt, but of that which is called virtue in the beſt of the pieces wrote for the theatre, he will find it exceeding different from

Chriſtian morals; and, that an adherence to it would be, in moſt inſtances, a wilful departure from the rules of a holy life.

However plainly this is founded upon the word of God, and ſound reaſon, there are ſome very unwilling to think, that ever their duty as Chriſtians ſhould conſtrain them to be at odds with the delicacies of life, or the polite and faſhionable pleaſures of the age. And, as the mind of man is very ingenious in the defence of that pollution which it loves, they ſometimes bring in criticiſm to their aid. They alledge, that by the "world" is underſtood, generally through the New Teſtament, thoſe who were heathens by profeſſion; and that the ſame oppoſition to true religion, in judgment and heart, is not to be aſcribed to thoſe who are members of the viſible church. It is anſwered, the word did indeed ſignify as they ſay, for this plain reaſon, that in the early days of Chriſtianity, when it was under perſecution, few or none would make profeſſion of it, unleſs they did really believe it. But is not the meaning ſtill the ſame? Can we ſuppoſe that the hatred of the then world, was at the name of religion only, and not at the ſubſtance? Was the devil "the prince of "this world," then? and has he not now equal dominion over, and is he not equally ſerved by thoſe who are profane in their lives, though they were once baptiſed? Was he the ſpirit that "then worked," and is he not the ſpirit that "now works," in the children of diſobedience? The truth therefore remains ſtill the ſame, thoſe who are in a natural and unregenerate ſtate, who hate true religion in their hearts, muſt have ſomething very different before they can be pleaſed with ſeeing it on the ſtage.*

* There is an excellent paſſage to this purpoſe in an eſſay againſt plays, to be found in one of the volumes publiſhed about a hundred years ago, by the gentlemen of the Port-Royal in France, a ſociety of Janſeniſts, of great parts and eminent piety. This eſſay in particular, is by ſome ſaid to have been written by the prince of Conti. Section 15th of that eſſay, he ſays, "It is ſo true that plays are almoſt always a "repreſentation of vicious paſſions, that the moſt part of "Chriſtian virtues are incapable of appearing upon the ſtage. "Silence, patience, moderation, wiſdom, poverty, repentance,

That this argument may have its proper force, we ought to conſider, how great a proportion of perſons under the dominion of vice and wickedneſs there muſt always be among thoſe who attend the theatre. The far greateſt number of the world in general are ungodly. This is a fact which could hardly be denied, even though the following paſſage had not ſtood in the oracles of truth. "Enter ye in at the ſtrait gate; for wide is the gate, and "broad is the way that leadeth to deſtruction, and many "there be which go in thereat: Becauſe ſtrait is the gate, "and narrow is the way that leadeth unto life, and few "there be that find it." Matt. vii. 13, 14. And as none can attend the ſtage, but thoſe in higher life, and more affluent circumſtances than the bulk of mankind, there is ſtill a greater proportion of them who are enemies to pure and undefiled religion. Thus, ſays our Saviour to his diſciples, "Verily I ſay unto you, that a rich man ſhall "hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven. And again "I ſay unto you, it is eaſier for a camel to go through "the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into "the kingdom of God." Matt. xix. 23, 24. To the ſame purpoſe the apoſtle Paul ſays, "Ye ſee your calling, "brethren, how that not many wiſe men after the fleſh, "not many mighty, not many noble are called." 1 Cor. i. 26. This does not at all ſuppoſe, that thoſe in high life are originally more corrupt in their nature than others, but it ariſes from their being expoſed to much greater and ſtronger temptations. Now, if from the ſmall num-

"are no virtues, the repreſentation of which can divert the "ſpectators; and above all, we never hear humility ſpoken of, "and the bearing of injuries. It would be ſtrange to ſee a "modeſt and ſilent religious perſon repreſented. There muſt "be ſomething great and renowned according to men, or at "leaſt ſomething lively and animated, which is not met withal "in Chriſtian gravity and wiſdom; and therefore thoſe who "have been deſirous to introduce holy men and women upon "the ſtage, have been forced to make them appear proud, "and to make them utter diſcourſes more proper for the an-"cient Roman heroes, than for ſaints and martyrs. Their "devotion upon the ſtage ought alſo to be always a little ex-"traordinary."

ber of real Chriſtians in the upper ranks of life, we again ſubtract ſuch as count the ſtage unlawful or dangerous, or have no inclination to it, there will very few remain of thoſe who are "the ſalt of the earth," to ſeaſon the unhallowed aſſembly. What ſort of productions then muſt they be, which ſhall have the approbation of ſuch judges? How much more proper to pollute than to reform, to poiſon than to cure? If ſuch in fact the great bulk of plays have always hitherto been, from what has been ſaid, it ought not to be wondered at, becauſe it cannot be otherwiſe.

It is very poſſible, that ſome may be all this while holding the argument very cheap, and ſaying with lord Shaftesbury, "The true genius is of a nobler nature "than ſervilely to ſubmit to the corrupt or vitiated taſte "of any age or place;—he works not for gain, but de-"ſpiſes it;—he knows, and will not ſwerve from the "truth of art; he will produce what is noble and excel-"lent in its kind;—he will refine the public ear, and "teach them to admire in the right place." Theſe, though I do not cite any particular paſſage, are all of them ſentiments, and moſt of them expreſſions, of that author ſo much admired among modern philoſophers.—But the objection is eaſily ſolved. The obſervation is allowed to be juſt, and to hold with reſpect to the poetic, oratorial, or any human art, becauſe we know of no higher ſtandard in any of theſe, than what human nature in its preſent ſtate, will moſt admire, when it is exhibited to view. Accordingly, the great poet and the great orator, though, through the prevalence of a bad taſte, they may find it difficult at firſt to procure attention, yet they will procure it at laſt: and when they are heard, they carry the prize from all inferior pretenders: and indeed, their doing ſo is the very touchſtone and trial of their art itſelf. In this caſe there lies no appeal from the judgment of the public or the multitude (as David Hume has ſaid for once according to truth) to the judgment of a wiſer few.

But there cannot be any thing more abſurd than to ſuppoſe, that the ſame thing will hold in morals and religion. The dramatic poets in Athens, where the ſtage

was firſt eſtabliſhed, improved upon one another, and refined ther own taſte, and that of their audience, as to the elegance of their compoſitions. Nay, they ſoon brought tragedy, as a great critic* obſerves, to as great perfection as the nature of the thing ſeems to admit of. But whoever will from this infer, that they improved in their morals in the ſame proportion, or by that means, will fall into a very groſs miſtake. This indeed ſeems to be the great error of modern infidels, to ſuppoſe that there is no more in morals than a certain taſte and ſenſe of beauty and elegance. Natural talents in the human mind are quite diſtinct from moral diſpoſitions, and the excellence of the one is no evidence at all of the prevalence of the other. On the contrary, the firſt are many times found in the higheſt perfection, where there is a total abſence of the laſt. And therefore, that true genius is the object of univerſal approbation, hinders not but that true goodneſs is the object of general averſion. The Scripture aſſures us, that all men are by nature under the power of ſin, "that every imagination of the thoughts of man is "only evil from his youth, and that continually," Gen. vi. 5. "That the carnal mind is enmity againſt God, "and," till it be renewed by divine grace, "is not ſub-"ject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." Rom. viii. 7.

Now it is utterly impoſſible and ſelf-contradictory, that men ſhould approve and delight in that which is contrary to the habitual prevailing temper of their hearts; and to bring about a change in them is not in the power of any human art, but with the concurrence of the Spirit and grace of God. In this he has given no authority to the players to act under him, nay, he has expreſsly told us, that he will not ordinarily, in any way whatever, make uſe of the perfection of human art, but of the plaineſt and weakeſt outward means. Thus the apoſtle Paul tells us his Maſter ſent him, "to preach the goſpel, not "with wiſdom of words, leſt the croſs of Chriſt ſhould be "made of none effect." 1 Cor. i. 17. And, "after that

* Ariſtotle.

" in the wiſdom of God, The world by wiſdom knew not " God, it pleaſed God by the fooliſhneſs of preaching to " ſave them that believe." 1 Cor. i. 21. He alſo profeſſes that his practice had always been conformed to this rule, " And I brethren, when I came to you, came not with " excellency of ſpeech or of wiſdom, declaring unto you " the teſtimony of God." 1 Cor. ii. 1. " And my ſpeech " and my preaching was not with enticing words of " man's wiſdom, but in demonſtration of the Spirit and " of power. That your faith ſhould not ſtand in the wiſ- " dom of men, but in the power of God*." 1 Cor. ii. 4, 5.

It may be neceſſary here to obviate an objection, that in the holy Scriptures themſelves we find ſeveral paſſages which ſeem to ſignify that true religion, though it is not the choice of all men, is yet the object of univerſal approbation. Thus we are told, that " the righteous ſhall " be in everlaſting remembrance, but the memory of the " wicked ſhall rot." Nay, we are exhorted by the apoſtle Paul to the practice of our duty in ſuch terms as theſe, " Whatſoever things are true, whatſoever things are

* Perhaps ſome will aſk here, Is then human art, and are natural talents, which are the gifts of God, wholly excluded from his ſervice? I anſwer, they are not. And yet the inſtances of their being eminently uſeful are exceeding rare. Such is the imperfection of the human mind, that it can hardly at the ſame time, give great attention and application to two diſtinct ſubjects; and therefore, when men give that intenſe application to human art, which is neceſſary to bring it to its perfection, they are apt to overlook the power and grace of God, without which all art is vain and ineffectual. Agreeably to this, when men of eminent talents have been of ſervice in religion, it has been commonly by the exerciſe of ſelf-denial, by making a very ſparing and moderate uſe of them, and ſhewing themſelves ſo deeply penetrated with a ſenſe of the important truths of the everlaſting goſpel, as to deſpiſe the beauties and embelliſhments of human ſkill, too great an attention to which is evidently inconſiſtent with the other. Well, ſay refined obſervers, this is the very perfection of art to uſe it with great reſerve, and to keep it out of view as much as poſſible. And it is indeed the perfection of art to have the appearance of this, but it is peculiar to a renewed heart to have it in reality.

" lovely, whatſoever things are of good report, if there " be any virtue, if there be any praiſe, think on theſe " things." But theſe muſt ſurely be explained in ſuch a manner, as to be conſiſtent with the clear and ſtrong paſſages mentioned above; which it is not difficult to do. The matter of many good actions, particularly ſocial virtues, the duties of the ſecond table of the law, wicked men do often approve, nay, they may not only ſee ſome beauty, but feel ſome pleaſure in them, from natural, though unſanctified affections leading to them. But truly good actions, inſtances of holy obedience to God, in their manner, and in the principles from which they ought to flow, they neither can approve nor perform.

Nothing can be done agreeable to the will of God, but what hath the following properties. It muſt be done from a ſenſe, not only of the unalterable obligation, but the perfect excellence of the law of God, Rom. vii. 12. renouncing all pretence of merit in the actor, Gal. ii. 20. Phil. iii. 8.; depending for aſſiſtance entirely on divine ſtrength, John xv. 5.; and with a ſingle eye to the divine glory, 1 Cor. x. 31. 1 Pet. iv. 11. It is not the matter of an action that renders it truly holy, but the prevalence of theſe principles in the heart of the performer. And they are ſo far from being generally approved, that they are hated and deſpiſed, and the very profeſſion of moſt of them at leaſt, ridiculed by every worldly man. The truth is, it is not eaſy to diſcover theſe principles otherwiſe than by narration. They lie deep in the heart, they do not ſeek to diſcover themſelves, and the ſhewing them on the ſtage would be a ſort of contradiction to their nature. I believe it would exceed the art of moſt poets or actors, to exhibit by outward ſigns, true ſelf-denial, without joining to it ſuch oſtentation, as would deſtroy its effect. Or if it could be done, it would be ſo far from being delightful to thoſe who " through the pride of their heart will not ſeek after " God," that it would fill them with diſguſt or diſdain. So that all friends of the ſtage ought to join with David Hume, who hath excluded ſelf-denial, humility, and mortification, from the number of the virtues, and ranked them among the vices.

From this it appears, that worldly men will bear a form of godlineſs, but the ſpirit and power of it they cannot endure. When therefore, the Scriptures repreſent religion, or any part of it, as amiable in the eyes of mankind in general, it is only giving one view of its excellence in itſelf or in its matter: but this can never be intended to make the judgment of bad men its ſtandard or meaſure. And when the approbation of men is propoſed as an argument to duty, it cannot be conſidered in any other light, than as an aſſiſtant ſubordinate motive to preſerve us from its violation; for the Scriptures will never warrant us to aim at the praiſe of men, as the reward of our compliance.

If there be any more than what is ſaid above in the teſtimony which wicked men give in favor of religion, it is but the voice of natural conſcience, that is, the voice of God in them, and not their own; and as it is extorted from them againſt their will, they do all in their power to deſtroy the force of the evidence. This we may be ſenſible of, if we will recollect, that it is always general, and that many ſpeak well of ſomething which they call religion in general, when yet there is hardly any of the ſervants of God, in whoſe character and conduct they will not endeavor either to find or make a flaw. The truth is, though ſome few heroes in profanity vilify religion in itſelf directly, and in all its parts, the plurality of ſcoffers only tell you, this and the other thing is not religion, but ſuperſtition, preciſeneſs, fancy or whim, and ſo on. But at the ſame time, if you take away all that by ſome or other is reflected on under theſe appellations, you will leave little behind. Which plainly teaches us this truth, that no man will cordially approve of ſuch a ſcheme of religion as he does not believe and embrace, or inwardly and without diſſimulation applaud a character that is better than in his own: at leaſt, than his own either is, or he falſely preſumes it to be*.

* For aſcertaining the ſenſe, and confirming the truth of this paſſage, it is proper to obſerve, That by the word [better] is not ſo much to be underſtood higher in degree, as different in kind. Though even in the firſt ſenſe it ſeems to hold pretty ge-

For this reaſon, the apoſtle John gives it as a mark or evidence of regeneration, "We know that we have paſſ-"ed from death to life, becauſe we love the brethren;" that is to ſay, a ſincere and prevalent love to a ſaint as ſuch, can dwell in no heart but that which is ſanctified.

It will be proper here to take notice, becauſe it has ſome relation to this ſubject of what the advocates of the ſtage often make their boaſt, that before a poliſhed audience things groſsly criminal are not ſuffered to be acted; and that it is one of the rules of the drama, that, if ſuch things be ſuppoſed, they muſt be kept behind the ſcenes. We are often put in mind of the pure taſte of an Athenian audience, who, upon one of the actors expreſſing a profane thought, all roſe up and left the theatre. A famous French tragedian, Corneille, alſo takes notice of it as an evidence of the improvement of the ſtage in his time, that one of his beſt written pieces had not ſucceeded, "Becauſe "it ſtruck the ſpectators with the horrid idea of a proſtitu-

nerally in compariſons between man and man. Men commonly extend their charity to thoſe who have leſs, and not to thoſe who have more goodneſs than themſelves. They are very few, who, when they ſee others more ſtrict and regular in their conduct than they are willing to be, do not aſcribe it either to wickedneſs or hypocriſy. Perhaps indeed, the reaſon of this may be, that a gradual difference as to the actions done, is conſidered as conſtituting a ſpecific difference in the moral character; and men condemn others not for being better than themſelves, upon their own notion of goodneſs, but for placing religion in the extremes, which they apprehend ought to be avoided. This confirms the remark made above, that every man's own character is the ſtandard of his approbation, and ſhows at the ſame time its inconſiſtency with that humility which is eſſential to every chriſtian. Wherever there is a real approbation, and ſincere confeſſion of ſuperior worth, there is alſo an unfeigned imitation of it. The chriſtian not only knows himſelf to be infinitely diſtant from God, whom yet he ſupremely loves, but thinks himſelf leſs than the leaſt of all ſaints; but he could neither love the one nor the other, if he had not a real, however diſtant likeneſs; if he had not the ſeeds of every good diſpoſition implanted in him, the growth of which is his ſupreme deſire, and the improvement of which is the conſtant object of his care and diligence.

" tion, to which a holy woman had been condemned." As to the caſe of the Athenians, it were eaſy to ſhow from the nature and circumſtances of the fact, that this reſentment at the profanity of the poet, though it was expreſſed in the theatre, was by no means learned there. But it is needleſs to enter into any nice diſquiſition upon this ſubject, for all that follows from any ſuch inſtances, is, that there are ſome things ſo very groſs and ſhocking, that, as but a few of the moſt abandoned will commit them, ſo the reſt of the world can have no delight in beholding them. There is, no doubt, a great variety of characters differing one from another in the degree of their degeneracy, and yet all of them eſſentially diſtinct from true piety.

To ſet this matter in a juſt light, we muſt remember, that, as has been confeſſed above, the matter of many good actions, or a defective imperfect form of virtue is approved by the generality of the world; and, that they are very much ſwayed in their actions by a view to public praiſe. Therefore, they are mutually checks to one another, and vice is not ſeen on a theatre in a groſs, but commonly in a more dangerous, becauſe an engaging and inſinuating form. The preſence of ſo many witneſſes does reſtrain and diſguiſe ſin, but cannot change its nature, or render it innocent. The purity of the theatre can never be carried farther by the taſte of the audience, than what is required in converſation with the polite and faſhionable world. There vice is in ſome meaſure reſtrained; men may be wicked, but they muſt not be rude. How much this amounts to is but too well known; it is no more than that we muſt not diſguſt thoſe with whom we converſe, and varies with their character. This is ſo far from being agreeable to the rules of the goſpel, that a ſerious Chriſtian is often obliged, from a ſenſe of duty, to be guilty of a breach of good manners, by adminiſtring unacceptable reproof.

Thus it appears that, in the ſtage, the audience gives law to the poet, which is much the ſame thing as the ſcholar chuſing his own leſſon; and whether this be a ſafe or profitable method of inſtruction, is eaſy to judge. Every

one who knows human nature, especially who believes the representation given of it in scripture, must conclude, that the young will be seduced into the commission, and the older confirmed and hardened in the practice of sin; because characters, fundamentally wrong, will be there painted out in an amiable light, and divested of what is most shameful and shocking. By this means conscience, instead of being alarmed, and giving faithful testimony, is deceived and made a party in the cause. In short, vice in the theatre must wear the garb, assume the name, and claim the reward of virtue.

How strong a confirmation of this have we from experience? Have not plays in fact commonly turned upon the characters most grateful, and the events most interesting to corrupt nature? Pride, under the name of greatness of mind, ambition and revenge, under those of valor and heroism, have been their constant subjects. But chiefly love: this, which is the strongest passion, and the most dangerous in the human frame, and from which the greatest number of crimes, and crimes the most atrocious, have sprung, was always encouraged upon the stage. There, women are swelled with vanity, by seeing their sex deified and adored; there men learn the language, as well as feel by sympathy, the transports of that passion; and there the hearts of both are open and unguarded to receive the impression, because it is covered with a mask of honor. Hath this then been only the case at particular times of occasional corruption, or for want of a proper regulation of the stage? No, it is inseparable from its constitution. Such hath been the nature and tendency of plays in all former ages, and such, from the taste and disposition of those who attend them, it is certain they will forever continue to be.*

* Perhaps it will be alledged, that the whole force of this reasoning may be evaded, by supposing a stage directed by the magistrate, and supported at the public charge. In this case the performers would be under no temptation, for gain, to gratify the taste of the audience, and the managers would have quite a different intention. It is confessed, that this supposition seems considerably to weaken the arguments above used,

Another argument, which ſhows the ſtage to be an improper method of inſtruction, or rather that it is pernicious and hurtful, may be drawn from its own nature. In its moſt improved ſtate, it is a picture of human life, and muſt repreſent characters as they really are. An author for the ſtage is not permitted to feign, but to paint and copy.

though perhaps more in theory than it would do in practice. But I would aſk any who make ſuch a ſuppoſition, why this inviolable attachment to the ſtage? Why muſt ſo many efforts be made to preſerve it in ſome ſhape or other! What are its mighty benefits, that it muſt be forced as it were, out of its own natural courſe in order to make it lawful, rather than we will give it up as pernicious?—It is alſo to be obſerved that, however uſeful an ordinance of God, magiſtracy be for public order, there is very little ſecurity in the direction of magiſtrates, for ſound and wholeſome inſtruction in religion or morals. We can never depend upon them for this, unleſs they are themſelves perſons of true piety, and not always even when that is the caſe, becauſe they may be guilty of many errors in judgment. Now it is not reaſonable to hope, that magiſtrates in any country, will be always, or even generally, perſons of true piety. Such, with the other qualifications neceſſary to magiſtrates, are not always to be found. Neither is there any neceſſity for it; becauſe, though doubtleſs, thoſe who fear God will be the moſt faithful magiſtrates, and the moſt dutiful ſubjects, yet the greateſt part of the duties of both may be performed without this, in a manner in which the public will ſee and feel very little difference. Magiſtracy has only the outward carriage, and not the heart for its object; and it is the ſenſible effect which the public looks for, and not the principle from which any thing is done. Therefore, as on the one hand, if a ſubject obeys the laws, and outwardly fulfils the duties of his ſtation, the magiſtrate hath nothing farther to demand, though it be only for "wrath," and not "for conſcience ſake;" ſo on the other, if a magiſtrate be diligent in preſerving order, and promoting the general good, though the motive of his actions be no better than vanity, ambition, or the fear of man well concealed, the public reaps the benefit, and has no ground of complaint, even whilſt his character is deteſtable in the ſight of God. But this magiſtrate can never be ſafely intruſted with the direction of what regards our moral and ſpiritual improvement, and he would be going out of his own ſphere ſhould he attempt it.——After all, it makes little difference whether the magiſtrate or any body elſe directs the ſtage, while the attendance is voluntary; for in that caſe, it muſt either be ſuited to the taſte of the audience, or it will be wholly deſerted.

Though he ſhould introduce things or perſons ever ſo excellent, if there were not deſcerned a reſemblance between them and real life, they would be ſo far from being applauded, that they would not be ſuffered, but would be condemned, as a tranſgreſſion of the fundamental rules of the art. Now, are not the great majority of characters in real life bad? Muſt not the greateſt part of thoſe repreſented on the ſtage be bad? And therefore muſt not the ſtrong impreſſion which they make upon the ſpectators be hurtful in the ſame proportion?

It is a known truth, eſtabliſhed by the experience of all ages, that bad example has a powerful and unhappy influence upon human characters. Sin is of a contagious and ſpreading nature, and the human heart is but too ſuſceptible of the infection. This may be aſcribed to ſeveral cauſes, and to one in particular which is applicable to the preſent caſe, that the ſeeing of ſin frequently committed, muſt gradually abate that horror which we ought to have of it upon our minds, and which ſerves to keep us from yielding to its ſolicitations. Frequently ſeeing the moſt terrible objects renders them familiar to our view, and makes us behold them with leſs emotion. And from ſeeing ſin without reluctance, the tranſition is eaſy, to a compliance with its repeated importunity, eſpecially as there are latent remaining diſpoſitions to ſinning in every heart that is but imperfectly ſanctified. It will be difficult to aſſign any other reaſon, why wickedneſs is always carried to a far greater height in large and populous cities, than in the country. Do not multitudes, in places of great reſort, come to perpetrate, calmly and ſedately, without any remorſe, ſuch crimes as would ſurpriſe a leſs knowing ſinner ſo much as to hear of? Can it then be ſafe, to be preſent at the exhibition of ſo many vicious characters as always muſt appear upon the ſtage? Muſt it not, like other examples, have a ſtrong, though inſenſible influence, and indeed the more ſtrong, becauſe unperceived.

Perhaps ſome will ſay, This argument draws very deep, it is a reproaching of Providence, and finding fault with the order which God hath appointed, at leaſt

permitted, to take place in the world, where the very ſame proportion of wicked characters is to be ſeen. But is there not a wide difference between the permiſſion of any thing by a wiſe, holy, and juſt God, or its making part of the plan of providence, and our preſuming to do the ſame thing, without authority, and when we can neither reſtrain it within proper bounds, nor direct it to its proper end? There are many things which are proper and competent to God, which it would be the moſt atrocious wickedneſs in man to imitate. Becauſe it is both good and juſt in God to viſit us with ſickneſs, or to take us away by death when he ſees it proper, would it therefore be lawful in us, to bring any of them upon ourſelves at our own pleaſure? I ſhould rather be inclined to think, that theſe ſportive repreſentations on the ſtage, inſtead of being warranted by their counterpart in the world, are a daring profanation, and as it were, a mockery of divine Providence, and ſo to be conſidered in a light yet more dreadful, than any in which they have been hitherto viewed. Beſides, it ought to be remembered that, though evil actions, as permitted, make a part of the will of God, yet hitherto, all who deſerve the name of Chriſtians have affirmed, that what is ſinful in any action is to be aſcribed to the will of the creature as its adequate cauſe; and therefore, exhibiting human actions and characters upon the ſtage, is not only repreſenting the works of God, but repeating the ſins of men.

The criminal and dangerous nature of ſuch a conduct will farther appear from this, that it is by juſt and neceſſary conſequence forbidden in the word of God. There we find, that though in his ſovereign providence he permits the commiſſion of ſin, ſuffers his own people to continue mixed with ſinners in this ſtate, and makes their connexion with them in ſome meaſure unavoidable, as a part of their trial, yet he hath expreſsly prohibited them from having any more communication with ſuch, than he himſelf hath made neceſſary. We are warned in Scripture, that "evil communications corrupt good manners," and therefore, that we muſt fly the ſociety of

the ungodly. The Pſalmiſt tells us, " Bleſſed is the man " that walketh not in the counſel of the ungodly, nor " ſtandeth in the way of ſinners, nor ſitteth in the ſeat " of the ſcornful," Pſal. i. 1. Agreeably to this the characters of good men in Scripture are always repreſented. Thus the Pſalmiſt David records his own reſolution, " I " will ſet no wicked thing before mine eyes, I hate the " work of them that turn aſide, it ſhall not cleave to me. " A froward heart ſhall depart from me, I will not know " a wicked perſon," Pſal. ci. 3, 4. The ſame ſays elſewhere, " I am a companion of all them that fear thee, " and of them that keep thy precepts," Pſal. cxix. 63.— " Depart from me ye evil doers, for I will keep the com- " mandments of my God." ver. 115.

But there is no need of citing paſſages of Scripture to this purpoſe; it is well known, that good men, though they will be very cautious of raſhly determining characters that are doubtful, and will far leſs diſcover a proud and phariſaical contempt of any who may yet be veſſels of mercy, will however, carefully avoid all unneceſſary communication with ſinners. They will neither follow their perſons from inclination, nor view their conduct with pleaſure. On the contrary, when they cannot wholly fly from their ſociety, it becomes a heavy burthen, and in ſome caſes intolerable, and ſo as to require the interpoſition of the ſame kind Providence that " de- " livered juſt Lot, vexed with the filthy converſation of " the wicked." Is there any conſiſtency between ſuch a character, and attending the ſtage with delight? Will thoſe who " behold tranſgreſſors, and are grieved," croud with eagerneſs to the theatre, where the ſame perſons and actions are brought under review? Will what affected them with ſorrow in the commiſſion, be voluntarily choſen, and made ſubſervient to their pleaſure in the repetition.

I cannot help here calling to mind the anxious concern which wiſe and pious parents uſually ſhew for their children, on account of the ſnares to which they are unavoidably expoſed in an evil world. How carefully do they point out, and how ſolemnly do they charge them

to ſhun the paths in which deſtroyers go. They uſe this caution with reſpect to the world, even as under the government of God; and in ſo doing they follow the example of their Saviour, who, in the proſpect of leaving his diſciples, after many excellent advices, puts up for them this interceſſory prayer; "And now I am no more "in this world, but theſe are in the world, and I am come "to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name "thoſe whom thou haſt given me, that they may be one "as we are.—I pray not that thou ſhouldſt take them "out of the world, but that thou ſhouldſt keep them "from the evil," John xvii. 11, 15. Can any expect that this prayer will be heard in their behalf, who are not content with ſeeing the world as it is ordered by a wiſe and holy God, but muſt ſee it over again, in a vile imitation, by a ſinful man.

It will probably be ſaid, that this ſtrikes as much againſt hiſtory, at leaſt the writing and reading of human, commonly called, profane hiſtory, as againſt the writing and ſeeing of dramatic repreſentations. But the caſes are by no means the ſame; the knowledge of hiſtory is, in many reſpects, neceſſary for the great purpoſes of religion.—Were not this the caſe, there would be little difficulty in admitting the conſequence. Perhaps, even as it is, it had been better for the world that ſeveral ancient facts and characters, which now ſtand upon record, had been buried in oblivion*. At any rate it may be ſafely af-

* Perhaps ſome will be ſurprized at what is here ſaid on the ſubject of hiſtory, who have not uſually viewed it in this light. And indeed this is the great difficulty in the whole of the preſent argument, to overcome ſtrong prepoſſeſſions, and to ſhew men the ſin and danger of a practice which they know to be common, and have been long accuſtomed to look upon as lawful and ſafe. For this reaſon, it is probable, that the beſt way of proving that the above aſſertion on the ſubject of hiſtory, is agreeable to Scripture and reaſon, will be by a caſe perfectly ſimilar, but more frequently handled. Do not all Chriſtian writers, without exception, who treat of the government of the tongue, lay down this as a rule, that we are not to report the ſins of others, though we know the truth of the facts, unleſs where it is neceſſary to ſome good end? Now why ſhould there be any different rule in writing, than in converſation? What is done either way, is the ſame in ſubſtance, viz. communicating information;

firmed, that romances and fabulous narrations are a ſpecies of compoſition, from which the world hath received as little benefit, and as much hurt, as any that can be named, excepting plays themſelves, to which they are ſo nearly allied. The firſt are only exceeded by the laſt, as to their capacity of doing miſchief, by the circumſtances of action, and the preſence at once of ſo many perſons, among whom by mutual ſympathy, the ſpiritual poiſon ſpreads faſter and penetrates deeper.

Leſt it ſhould be pretended that ſuch a turn is given to things in the repreſentation, as that, though the greateſt part of the actions repreſented are ill in themſelves, yet vice is reproached or ridiculed, virtue ſet upon a throne, rewarded and honored: let it be called to mind that, as has been ſhewn above, the author is not left at liberty to do in this as he pleaſes. He muſt gratify the public taſte, and the rules he is obliged to obſerve, have rather the contrary effect. For he muſt diveſt his bad characters of what is moſt horrid and ſhocking, and preſent them leſs deformed than they really are. Beſides, though he may conceal a part, he muſt not alter nature ſo far as he goes, but take it as he finds it. Accordingly ſome of our modern critics tell us, that there ought to be no particular moral in a dramatic performance, becauſe that is a departure from nature, and ſo not in taſte.

It ought not to be forgotten, that attending dramatic repreſentations is not only ſeeing a great plurality of bad characters without neceſſity, and ſeeing them with patience, but it is ſeeing them with pleaſure. Whether or not en-

and writing, which may be called viſible ſpeech, is much more laſting in its nature and extenſive in its effects. If any aſk, How, or why the knowledge of hiſtory is neceſſary to the purpoſes of religion? I anſwer, it is neceſſary for proving the truths of natural and confirming thoſe of revealed religion; for repelling the attacks of adverſaries, and giving us ſuch a view of the plan of providence, as may excite us to the exerciſe of the duties of adoration, thankfulneſs, truſt, and ſubmiſſion to the ſupreme Diſpoſer of all events. Real facts only are proper for this purpoſe, and not feigned ſtories, in the choice and dreſſing of which, experience teaches us, the great end is, that man be pleaſed, and not that God may be glorified.

tertainment be yielded to be the only or ultimate effect of plays, ſurely it cannot be denied to be one effect ſought and expected from them, and from every part of them. An actor is as much applauded, and gives as much pleaſure to the ſpectators, when he repreſents a bad character to the life, as a good. Is there no danger then, that a heart ſoftened by delight, ſhould be more liable to infection from evil than at other times? Is there no danger that an aſſociation ſhould be formed in the mind, between the ſenſe of pleaſure and the commiſſion of ſin? Will any perſon affirm, that in ſuch circumſtances he feels that holy indignation againſt ſin, which every Chriſtian ought to conceive upon ſeeing it committed? Or, that he is able to preſerve that awe and fear, which he ought to have of the juſt judgment of God, when he ſees the crimes that merit it boldly re-acted, and finely mimicked in a perſonated character.

So far is this from being the caſe, that every perſon attending the repreſentation of a play, enters in ſome meaſure himſelf, as well as the actors, into the ſpirit of each character, and the more ſo the better the action is performed. His attention is ſtrongly fixed, his affections are ſeized and carried away, and a total forgetfulneſs of every thing takes place, except what is immediately before him. Can the various paſſions be ſo ſtrongly excited as they are ſometimes known to be, and no effect remain? Will not the paſſion of love, for example, after it has been ſtrongly felt by the ſpectator in ſympathy with the actor, be a little more ready to recur, eſpecially as nature prompts, and various ſoliciting objects are daily preſented to his eye? The author terminates his plot as he ſees beſt, and draws what concluſions he thinks proper from his characters, but he has no reaſon to think that he can controul the paſſions which he raiſes in the ſpectators in the ſame manner, and not ſuffer them to exceed the bounds of his deſcription. Will not the paſſion of revenge, that right hand of falſe greatneſs of mind, after it has been ſtrongly excited in the theatre, be apt to riſe again upon every real or ſuppoſed provocation? Some learned obſervers of nature tell us, that every paſſion we

feel cauſes a new modification of the blood and ſpirits; if there is any truth in this, then every paſſion excited in the theatre takes poſſeſſion for a time of the very animal frame, makes a ſeat to itſelf, and prepares for a ſpeedy return.

Having thus endeavored to ſhow, that the ſtage, whether amuſement or inſtruction be aimed at in it, cannot be attended by any Chriſtian without ſin; there is a third general argument againſt it, which merits conſideration. It is, that no perſon can contribute to the encouragement of the ſtage, without being partaker of the ſins of others. This is proper to be attended to, as it is againſt a public theatre that the arguments in this eſſay are chiefly levelled; ſo that, if it be criminal at all, every perſon attending it, is not only faulty by his own proper conduct, but is farther chargeable with the guilt of ſeducing others. Beſides, without this the argument, to ſome, would not be altogether complete, for after all that has been advanced, there may be a few, who in a good meaſure yield it to be true, and yet have another ſubterfuge remaining. They acknowledge, perhaps, that it is a moſt hazardous amuſement, to which others ought ordinarily to be preferred: That the bulk of plays will, much more probably, pollute than improve the far greateſt part of thoſe who attend them. Yet ſtill they are apt to figure to themſelves particular caſes as exceptions from the general rule, and to ſuppoſe, there are *ſome* plays which may be attended, or at leaſt, that there are *ſome* perſons, who have ſo much clearneſs of judgment, and ſo much conſtancy in virtue, as to ſeparate the corn from the chaff. At a particular time, they ſuppoſe, a perſon of this kind may, without receiving any hurt, be improved by the fine ſentiments contained in plays: and alſo learn ſomething to be applied to other purpoſes, of that force and juſtneſs of action, that grace and beauty of behaviour, which is no where ſeen in ſo great perfection as on the ſtage.

Upon this ſubject in general, it may be affirmed, that thoſe who have this confidence in the ſtrength of their own virtue, are far from being the perſons who may be moſt ſafely truſted in a place of danger. On the con-

trary, thoſe will probably be moſt truly ſtedfaſt, when expoſed to temptation, who are moſt diffident of themſelves, and do not wantonly run into it. Yet, ſince ſome may take encouragement from ſuch apprehenſions, it is proper to obſerve that, though there were truth in their pretence, yet would it not therefore be lawful for them to attend the theatre. They could not do ſo without contributing to the ſins of others, a thing expreſsly prohibited in the holy Scriptures, and indeed diametrically oppoſite to the two principal branches of true religion, concern for the glory of God, and compaſſion to the ſouls of men.

There are two ways in which the occaſional attending of plays, by thoſe who are of good character, even ſuppoſing it not hurtful to themſelves, contributes to the ſins of others. (1.) By ſupporting the players in that unchriſtian occupation. (2.) Encouraging, by their example, thoſe to attend all plays indiſcriminately, who are in moſt danger of infection.

Firſt, It contributes to ſupport the players in an unchriſtian occupation. After what has been ſaid above, and which I now take for granted, on the impropriety of plays as an amuſement, and the impoſſibility of furniſhing a ſtage with nothing but ſound and wholeſome productions, little doubt can remain, that the occupation of players is inconſiſtent with the character of a Chriſtian. Whatever occaſional preſence may be to ſome ſpectators, continual performing can never be lawful to the actors. On the very beſt ſuppoſition, it is a life of perpetual amuſement, which is equally contrary to reaſon and religion. It is a mean proſtitution of the rational powers, to have no higher end in view, than contributing to the pleaſure and entertainment of the idle part of mankind, and inſtead of taking amuſement with the moderation of a Chriſtian, to make it the very buſineſs and employment of life. How ſtrange a character does it make for one to live, in a manner, perpetually in a maſk, to be much oftener in a perſonated than in a real character? And yet this is the caſe with all players, if to the time ſpent in the repreſentation, you add that which is neceſſary to prepare for their

public appearances. What foul polluted minds muſt theſe be, which are ſuch a receptacle of foreign vanities, beſides their own natural corruption, and where one ſyſtem or plan of folly is obliterated only to make way for another.

But the life of players is not only idle and vain, and therefore inconſiſtent with the character of a Chriſtian, but it is ſtill more directly and groſsly criminal. We have ſeen above, that not only from the taſte of the audience, the prevailing tendency of all ſucceſsful plays muſt be bad, but that in the very nature of the thing, the greateſt part of the characters repreſented muſt be vicious. What then is the life of a player? It is wholly ſpent in endeavoring to expreſs the language, and exhibit a perfect picture of the paſſions of vicious men. For this purpoſe they muſt ſtrive to enter into the ſpirit, and feel the ſentiments proper to ſuch characters. Unleſs they do ſo, the performance will be quite faint and weak, if not wholly faulty and unnatural. And can they do this ſo frequently without retaining much of the impreſſion, and at laſt becoming in truth what they are ſo often in appearance? Do not the characters of all men take a tincture from their employment and way of life? How much more muſt theirs be infected, who are converſant, not in outward occupations, but in characters themſelves, the actions, paſſions, and affections of men? If their performances touch the audience ſo ſenſibly, and produce in them ſo laſting an effect, how much more muſt the ſame effects take place in themſelves, whoſe whole time is ſpent in this manner?

This is ſo certain, and at the ſame time ſo acknowledged a truth, that even thoſe who are fondeſt of theatrical amuſements, do yet notwithſtanding eſteem the employment of players a mean and ſordid profeſſion. Their character has been infamous in all ages, juſt a living copy of that vanity, obſcenity, and impiety which is to be found in the pieces which they repreſent. As the world has been polluted by the ſtage, ſo they have always been more eminently ſo, as it is natural to ſuppoſe, being the very ciſterns in which this pollution is collected, and

from which it is diſtributed to others. It makes no difference in the argument, that we muſt here ſuppoſe the ſtage to be regulated and improved, for as it hath been ſhewn, that it can never be ſo regulated as to be ſafe for the ſpectators, it muſt be always worſe for the actors, between whom and the audience the ſame proportion will ſtill remain. Can it then be lawful in any to contribute, in the leaſt degree, to ſupport men in this unhallowed employment? Is not the theatre truly and eſſentially, what it has been often called rhetorically, the ſchool of impiety, where it is their very buſineſs to learn wickedneſs? and will a Chriſtian, upon any pretended advantage to himſelf, join in this confederacy againſt God, and aſſiſt in endowing and upholding the dreadful ſeminary?

Secondly, men of good character going occaſionally to the theatre, contribute to the ſins of others, by emboldening thoſe to attend all plays indiſcriminately, who are in moſt danger of infection. If there be any at all, eſpecially if there be a great number, to whom the ſtage is noxious and ſinful, every one without exception is bound to abſtain. The apoſtle Paul expreſsly commands the Corinthians to abſtain from lawful things, when their uſing them would make their brother to offend, that is to ſay would lead him into ſin. "But take heed, leſt by "any means, this liberty of yours become a ſtumbling-"block to them that are weak. For if any man ſee thee "which haſt knowledge, ſit at meat in the idols temple, "ſhall not the conſcience of him that is weak, be embol-"dened to eat thoſe things which are offered to idols? "And through thy knowledge ſhall the weak brother pe-"riſh, for whom Chriſt died. But when ye ſin ſo againſt "the brethren, and wound their weak conſcience, ye ſin "againſt Chriſt. Wherefore if meat make my brother to "offend, I will eat no fleſh while the world ſtandeth, leſt "I make my brother to offend," 1. Cor. viii. 9—13.

There are many who ſeem to have entirely forgot that this precept is to be found in the word of God, and diſcover not the leaſt ſenſe of their obligation to comply with it. If by any plauſible pretences they imagine they can vindicate their conduct with regard to themſelves, or pal-

liate it with excuſes, they are quite unmindful of the injury which they do to others. I ſpeak not here of offending, in the ſenſe in which that word is commonly, though unjuſtly taken, as diſpleaſing others. Such as are diſpleaſed with the conduct of thoſe who attend the theatre, becauſe they eſteem it to be ſinful, are not thereby offended in the Scripture ſenſe of the word, except ſo far as ſome few of them are provoked to unchriſtian reſentment, or induced to draw raſh and general concluſions, from the indiſcretion of particular perſons, to the prejudice of whole orders of men. But vaſt multitudes are truly offended, or made to offend, as they are led into a practice, which, whatever it be to thoſe who ſet the example, is undoubtedly pernicious to them. Is it poſſible to deny, that under the beſt regulation of the theatre that can reaſonably be hoped for, to great numbers it muſt be hurtful, eſpecially as it is enticing to all? And, if that be but allowed, perſons of character and reputation cannot attend without contributing to the miſchief that is done.

Perhaps it will be objected to this application of the paſſage of ſcripture cited above, that the particular danger there pointed out by the apoſtle, is inducing men to venture upon a practice with a doubting conſcience. I think it highly probable, that this very preciſe caſe happens with many, who go to the theatre following the example of others. They are not entirely ſatisfied of its lawfulneſs, they ſtill have ſome inward reluctance of mind, but adventure to gratify a carnal inclination, being emboldened by the example of thoſe who are eſteemed men of underſtanding and worth. But even where their implicit truſt is ſo ſtrong as fully to ſatisfy them, and ſet their minds at eaſe, the apoſtle's argument holds with equal force, if thereby they are unavoidably led into ſin.

This will probably be looked upon as a very hard law, and it will be aſked, Is a man then never to do any thing that he has reaſon to believe will be miſinterpreted, or abuſed by others to their own hurt? The hardneſs of the law will wholly vaniſh, if we remember, that it is confined to things indifferent in their nature. In duties binding of their own nature, we are under no obligation to pay

any regard to the opinions of others, or the conſequences of our conduct upon them. But in things originally indifferent, which become duties, or not, preciſely on account of their conſequences, there we are to beware of making our brother to offend. The ſcripture rule is this, We muſt not commit the leaſt ſin under pretence of the moſt important end, though it were to ſave multitudes from ſins incomparably more heinous. But in matters of indifference, we are not to value the moſt beloved enjoyment ſo highly, as to endanger the ſalvation of one ſoul by inſnaring it into ſin. And can a real believer have the ſmalleſt objection, the leaſt riſing thought, againſt this equitable law? Shall we value any preſent gratification equally, nay, ſhall we once put it in the balance with the ſpiritual intereſt of an immortal ſoul? Now, who will be ſo ſhameleſs as to aſſert, that attending a public ſtage is to him a neceſſary duty? Or what defender of the ſtage will be ſo ſanguine as to affirm, that it is, or that he hopes to ſee it regulated ſo as to be ſafe or profitable to every mind? and yet till this is the caſe, it evidently ſtands condemned by the apoſtolic rule.

Since writing the above, I have met with a pamphlet juſt publiſhed, entitled, The morality of Stage-plays ſeriouſly conſidered. This author convinces me, that I have without ſufficient ground ſuppoſed, that nobody would affirm attending plays to be a neceſſary duty; for he has either done it, or gone ſo very near it, that probably the next author upon the ſame ſide will do it in plain terms, and aſſert, that all above the ſtation of tradeſmen who do not go to the play-houſe, are living in the habitual neglect of their duty, and ſinning grievouſly againſt God. If this looks ridiculous it is none of my fault, for I ſpeak it ſeriouſly: and it is a much more natural conſequence from his reaſoning, than any he has drawn from it himſelf.

He conſiders the paſſage of the apoſtle Paul, and ſays (which is true) that it holds only in the caſe of indifferent actions, but that we are to "do good in the face of preju-"dice." The way in which he ſhews it to be doing good, is pretty ſingular, but I paſs it by for a little, and obſerve, that probably he is not much accuſtomed to commenting

on such passages of scripture; for even granting his unreasonable supposition, doing good indefinitely is not opposed to indifferent actions in this, or any similar case. An action that is good in itself, is indifferent when it may be exchanged for another; when one as good, or better, may be put in its place. Nothing is opposed to indifferent actions here, but what is indispensibly necessary, and absolutely binding, both in itself, and in its circumstances. And indeed, though he is afraid at first to say so, he seems to carry the matter that length at last, making his conclusion a little broader than the premises, and saying in the close of the paragraph upon that subject, "What they do "to this purpose, either in opposing the bad, or promoting "the good, is MATTER OF DUTY, and their conduct in it "is not to be regulated by the opinion of any person who "is pleased to take offence."*

But how shall we refute this new and wonderful doctrine, of its being necessary that good men should attend the theatre? I cannot think of a better way of doing it, than tearing off some of the drapery of words, with which it is adorned and disguised, and setting his own assertions together in the form of a syllogism. "The manager of "every theatre must suit his entertainments to the compa- "ny, and if he is not supported by the grave and sober, "he must suit himself to the licentious and profane."—— "We know that in every nation there must be amuse- "ments and public entertainments, and the stage has al- "ways made one in every civilized and polished nation. "We cannot hope to abolish it."——Ergo, According to this author, it is the duty of good men to attend the stage. But I leave the reader to judge, Whether, from the first of his propositions, which is a certain truth, it is not more just to infer, that till the majority of those who attend the stage are good, its entertainment cannot be fit for the Christian ear; and because that will never be, no Christian ought to go there.

And what a shameful begging of the question is his second proposition, "That we cannot hope to abolish it."

* Page 23.

It is hard to tell what we may hope for in this age, but we inſiſt that it ought to be aboliſhed. Nay, we do hope to aboliſh it juſt as much as other vices. We cannot hope to ſee the time when there ſhall be no gaming, cheating, or lying; but we muſt ſtill preach againſt all ſuch vices, and will never exhort good men to go to gaming-tables, to perſuade them to play fair, and leſſen the wickedneſs of the practice. In ſhort, it is a full refutation of the extravagant aſſertion of good men being obliged, as matter of duty, to go to the theatre, that no ſuch thing is commanded in the word of God, and therefore it is not, and cannot be neceſſary to any.* And ſince it is evidently pernicious to great numbers, it can be lawful to none.

It would give Chriſtians a much more juſt, as well as more extenſive view of their duty, than they commonly have, if they would conſider their relation to, and neceſſary influence on one another. All their viſible actions have an effect upon others as well as themſelves. Every thing we ſee or hear makes ſome impreſſion on us, though for the moſt part unperceived, and we contribute every moment, to form each other's character. What a melancholy view then does it give us of the ſtate of religion among us at preſent, that when piety towards God has been excluded from many moral ſyſtems, and the whole of virtue confined to the duties of ſocial life, the better half of theſe alſo ſhould be cut off, and all regard to the ſouls of others forgotten or derided? Nothing indeed is left but a few expreſſions of compliment, a few inſignificant offices of preſent conveniency; for that which ſome modern refiners have dignified with the name of virtue, is nothing elſe but poliſhed luxury, a flattering of each other in their vices, a provocation of each other to ſenſual indulgence, and that "friendſhip of the world," which "is enmity with God."

* It is proper here to remark, how natural it was to ſuppoſe, that the argument would be carried this length, when the ſtage came to be pleaded for as uſeful in promoting the intereſts of virtue. And therefore I have above taken notice, that theſe prophets run unſent, the propriety of which remark will now clearly appear.

I would now ask the reader, after perusing the preceding arguments against the stage, Whether he is convinced that it is inconsistent with the character of a Christian, or not? If he shall answer in the negative, if he has still some remaining argument in its defence, or some method, which has not occurred to me, to take off the force of the reasoning, I would next ask, Whether it does not at least render it a doubtful point? Whether, joined with the concurrent testimony of the best and wisest men in all ages against it, as it appeared among them, and the impurity and corruption that still attends it, there is not at least some ground of hesitation? And, if so much be but allowed, it becomes on this very account unlawful to every Christian, who takes the word of God for the rule of his conduct. There clear evidence and full persuasion is required before an action can be lawful, and where doubt arises, we are commanded to abstain. "Happy is he that condemneth not himself in that thing "which he alloweth: and he that doubteth is damned, "if he eat; because he eateth not of faith, for whatsoever "is not of faith is sin," Rom. xiv. 22, 23.

Hitherto we have reasoned against what is called a "well-regulated stage." That is to say, instead of attacking the corruptions which now adhere to it, we have endeavored to show, that from the purpose intended by it, from the present state, and general taste of mankind, and the nature of the thing itself, a public theatre is not capable of such a regulation, as to make it consistent with the purity of the Christian profession to attend or support it. If any complain, that part of the above reasoning is too abstracted, and not quite level to the apprehension of every reader, let it be remembered, that it is directed against an idea so abstracted, that it never yet did, and from what we have seen, there is reason to believe it never can exist. It is indeed altogether imaginary, and is dress up by every author who defends it, in the manner and form that best pleases himself; so that it is infinitely less difficult to refute or shew the unlawfulness of a well-regulated stage, than to know what it is.

If the authors on this ſubject would enter into particulars, and give us a liſt of the uſeful and inſtructive plays with which our ſtage is to be ſerved; lay down a plan of ſtrict diſcipline, for introducing and preſerving purity among the actors; and ſhew us by whom the managers are to be choſen, and their fidelity tried, with ſome general rules for their conduct, it might ſoon be determined by plain and ſimple arguments, Whether ſuch an entertainment could be ſafely permitted to a Chriſtian, or not. But, when they give us no farther account of it, than by calling it a ſtage properly regulated, they involve themſelves at once in obſcurity, as to the very ſubject of their diſcourſe. It is no wonder then, that they can make a parade with a few glittering phraſes, as picture of nature, moral lecture, amiable character, compaſſion for virtue in diſtreſs, decency of the drama, and ſeveral others. We are put to a ſtand what to ſay to ſuch things, for if we ſpeak of the impure ſentiments of authors, or the wanton geſticulations of actors, all theſe are immediately given up, and yet the fort remains as entire as ever. Therefore, the method taken in this treatiſe, with all the diſadvantages that attend it, was looked upon to be the beſt and the cleareſt that could be choſen; to ſhow, that thoſe from whom a reformation of the ſtage muſt come, are neither able nor willing to make it; that the very materials of which this fine ſyſtem is to conſiſt are naught, and therefore, ſo muſt the product be always found upon trial.

It may indeed be matter of wonder, that among the many ſchemes and projects daily offered to the conſideration of the public, there has never been any attempt to point out a plauſible way, how the ſtage may be brought into, and kept in ſuch a ſtate of regulation as to be conſiſtent with the Chriſtian character. There have been attempts to ſhow how money may be in a manner created, and the national debt paid, or the annual ſupplies raiſed, without burdening the ſubject. Some, who have nothing of their own, have endeavored to perſuade the reſt of mankind, that it is the eaſieſt thing imaginable to grow rich in a few years, with little labor, by the improvement of moor,

moſs, or bees. But none, ſo far as I have heard or ſeen, have been ſo bold as to lay down a diſtinct plan for the improvement of the ſtage. When this is added to the conſiderations already mentioned, in will confirm every impartial perſon in the belief, that ſuch improvement is not to be expected.

I hope therefore, there may now be ſome proſpect of ſucceſs, in warning every one who wiſhes to be eſteemed a diſciple of Chriſt againſt the ſtage, as it hitherto has been, and now is. Experience is of all others the ſureſt teſt of the tendency of any practice. It is ſtill more to be depended on than the moſt plauſible and apparently concluſive reaſoning, upon what hath never yet been tried. Let us then conſider, what hath been the ſpirit and tendency of almoſt the whole plays which have been repreſented, from time to time, upon the ſtage. Have not love and intrigue been their perpetual theme, and that not in a common and orderly way, but with reſiſtance and impediments, ſuch as rivalſhip and jealouſy, the oppoſition of parents, and other things of a ſimilar nature, that the paſſions may be ſtrongly excited, and that the force of love, and its triumph over every obſtacle, may be ſet before the audience as a leſſon? Is not the polite well-bred man the hero of ſuch plays, a character formed upon the maxims of the world, and chiefly ſuch of them as are moſt contrary to the goſpel? Are not unchriſtian reſentment and falſe honor the characteriſtics of every ſuch perſon?

What is the character of a clergyman when it is taken from the ſtage? If the perſon introduced is ſuppoſed to poſſeſs any degree of ability, hypocriſy is the leading part of the character. But for the moſt part, awkwardneſs, ignorance, dulneſs and pedantry are repreſented as inſeparable from men of that function. This is not done to correct theſe faults when appearing in ſome of that profeſſion, by comparing them with others free from ſuch reproachful defects, but it is the character of the clergyman in general, who is commonly introduced ſingle, and compared with the men acquainted with the world, very little to his advantage. The truth is, it ſeems to be a maxim with dramatic authors, to ſtrip men of every pro-

feſſion of their ſeveral excellencies, that the rake may be adorned with the ſpoils: even learning is commonly aſcribed to him; how conſiſtently with truth or nature, and conſequently with taſte itſelf, I leave the reader to determine.

And where can the plays be found, at leaſt comedies, that are free from impurity, either directly or by alluſion and double-meaning? It is amazing to think, that women who pretend to decency and reputation, whoſe brighteſt ornament ought to be modeſty, ſhould continue to abet, by their preſence, ſo much unchaſtity, as is to be found in the theatre. How few plays are acted which a modeſt woman can ſee, conſiſtently with decency in every part? And even when the plays are more reſerved themſelves, they are ſure to be ſeaſoned with ſomething of this kind in the prologue or epilogue, the muſic between the acts, or in ſome ſcandalous farce with which the diverſion is concluded. The power of cuſtom and faſhion is very great, in making people blind to the moſt manifeſt qualities and tendencies of things. There are ladies who frequently attend the ſtage, who if they were but once entertained with the ſame images in a private family, with which they are often preſented there, would riſe with indignation, and reckon their reputation ruined if ever they ſhould return. I pretend to no knowledge of theſe things, but from printed accounts, and the public bills of what plays are to be acted, ſometimes by the particular deſire of ladies of quality, and yet may ſafely affirm, that no woman of reputation (as it is called in the world) much leſs of piety, who has been ten times in a play-houſe, durſt repeat in company all that ſhe has heard there. With what conſiſtency they gravely return to the ſame ſchools of lewdneſs, they themſelves beſt know.

It ought to be conſidered, particularly with regard to the younger of both ſexes, that, in the theatre, their minds muſt inſenſibly acquire an inclination to romance and extravagance, and be unfitted for the ſober and ſerious affairs of common life. Common or little things give no entertainment upon the ſtage, except when they

are ridiculed. There muſt always be ſomething grand, ſurpriſing and ſtriking. In comedies, when all obſtacles are removed, and the marriage is agreed on, the play is done. This gives the mind ſuch a turn, that it is apt to deſpiſe ordinary buſineſs as mean, or deride it as ridiculous. Aſk a merchant whether he chuſes that his apprentices ſhould go to learn exactneſs and frugality from the ſtage. Or, whether he expects the moſt punctual payments from thoſe whoſe generoſity is ſtrengthened there, by weeping over virtue in diſtreſs. Suppoſe a matron coming home from the theatre filled with the ideas that are there impreſſed upon the imagination, how low and contemptible do all the affairs of her family appear, and how much muſt ſhe be diſpoſed, (beſides the time already conſumed) to forget or miſguide them?

The actors themſelves are a ſignal proof of this. How ſeldom does it happen, if ever, that any of them live ſober and regular lives, pay their debts with honeſty, or manage their affairs with diſcretion? They are originally men of the ſame compoſition with others, but their employment wholly incapacitates them for prudence and regularity, gives them a diſſipation of mind and unſtaidneſs of ſpirit, ſo that they cannot attend to the affairs of life. Nay, if I am rightly informed, that variety of characters which they put on in the theatre, deprives them of common ſenſe, and leaves them in a manner no character at all of their own. It is confidently ſaid, by thoſe who have thought it worth while to make the trial, that nothing can be more inſipid than the converſation of a player on any other ſubject than that of his profeſſion. I cannot indeed anſwer for this remark, having it only by report, and never having exchanged a word with one of that employment in my life. However, if it holds, a degree of the ſame effect muſt neceſſarily be wrought upon thoſe who attend the ſtage.

But folly or bad management is not all that is to be laid to the charge of players: they are almoſt univerſally vicious, and of ſuch abandoned characters, as might juſtly make thoſe who defend the ſtage, aſhamed to ſpeak of learning virtue under ſuch maſters. Can men learn pie-

ty from the profane, mortification from the ſenſual, or modeſty from harlots? And will any deny that hired ſtage-players have always, and that deſervedly, borne theſe characters? Nay, though it could be ſuppoſed, that the ſpectators received no hurt themſelves, how is it poſſible that the performances of ſuch perſons can be attended, or their trade encouraged, without ſin?

This ſhows alſo, that attending a good play, even ſuppoſing there were a few unexceptionable, cannot be vindicated upon Chriſtian principles. It is pleaded for the new tragedy* lately introduced into our theatre, that it is an attempt to reform the ſtage, and make it more innocent or more uſeful. What this piece is in itſelf, nobody can ſay with certainty till it be publiſhed, though the account given of it by report is not exceeding favorable. But let it be ever ſo excellent in itſelf, the bringing of one good play upon the ſtage is altogether inſufficient, nay, is a method quite improper for reforming it. An author of a truly good piece would rather bury it in oblivion, than lend his own credit and that of his work, for the ſupport of thoſe that are bad. A Chriſtian can never attend the ſtage, conſiſtently with his character, till the ſcheme in general be made innocent or uſeful. He muſt not ſin himſelf, nor contribute to the ſins of others, in a certain degree, becauſe, unleſs he do ſo, they will ſin without him in a higher degree. In ſhort, ſuch an attempt can be conſidered in no other light, than as encouraging a pernicious practice, and ſupporting a criminal aſſociation. The better the play is, or the better the characters of thoſe who attend it are, the greater the miſchief, becauſe the ſtronger the temptation to others who obſerve it.

There is one inducement to attendance on the ſtage, which hath more influence than all the arguments with which its advocates endeavor to color over the practice; that it is become a part of faſhionable education. Without it, young perſons of rank think they cannot have that knowledge of the world which is neceſſary to their accompliſhment; that they will be kept in ruſticity of carriage,

* Douglaſs.

or narrowneſs of mind, than which nothing is more contemptible in the eyes of the reſt of mankind; that they will acquire the character of ſtiff and preciſe, and be incapable of joining in polite converſation, being ignorant of the topics upon which it chiefly turns. No better than theſe, it is to be feared, are the reaſons that many parents ſuffer their children to attend this and other faſhionable diverſions. How then ſhall we remove this difficulty? Why truly, by ſaying with the apoſtle John, to ſuch as will receive it, "All that is in the world, the luſt of the "fleſh, and the luſt of the eyes, and the pride of life, "is not of the father, but is of the world." 1 John. ii. 16. It is certainly the greateſt madneſs to ſeek the knowledge of the world by partaking with bad men in their ſins. Whatever knowledge cannot otherwiſe be acquired, is ſhameful, and not honorable. How cruel then are thoſe parents, who, inſtead of endeavoring to inſpire their children with a holy and manly reſolution, of daring to appear ſingular in an adherence to their duty, ſuffer them to be plunged in ſin, that they may not be defective in politeneſs. Why ſhould the world, or any thing elſe, be known, but in order to our ſpiritual improvement?*

* This is not meant to condemn all human accompliſhments, which have not an immediate reference to our religious improvement, but to affirm, that they ought to be kept in a juſt ſubordination and ſubſerviency, to the great and chief end of man. There are, no doubt, a great number of arts, both uſeful and ornamental, which have other immediate effects, than to make men holy; and becauſe they are, by the greateſt part of the world, abuſed to the worſt of purpoſes, they are conſidered as having no connexion with religion at all. But this is a miſtake; for a good man will be directed in the choice and application of all ſuch arts, by the general and leading purpoſe of his life. And as he who eats for no other or higher end than pleaſing his palate, is juſtly condemned as a mean and groveling ſenſualiſt, ſo, whoever has no farther view in his education and accompliſhment, than to ſhine and make a figure in the faſhionable world, does not in that reſpect act the part of a Chriſtian. In ſhort, theſe arts are among the number of indifferent things, which ſhould be ſupremely and ultimately directed to the glory of God. When they are not capable of this, either immediately or remotely, much more when they are contrary to it, they muſt be condemned.

Therefore, all that is truly valuable, muſt, by the very ſuppoſition, be innocently learned, and to bear with a noble diſdain the ſcoffs of more experienced ſinners is the greateſt glory.

Like to the above is another argument in favor of the ſtage, that men muſt have amuſements, and that the ſtage is much better than many others, which would probably be put in its place. It is ſaid, that of all the time ſpent by the faſhionable part of the world, at preſent, in diverſions, that which they allot to the ſtage is moſt innocently, or leaſt hurtfully employed. Is there any more in this, than a declaration of the ſhameful luxury and degeneracy of the preſent age, an alarming token of approaching judgment? Do not ſuch perſons know, that all ſerious Chriſtians condemn every one of theſe criminal pleaſures, and will never allow it as any advantage to exchange one of them for another. But it is leſs ſurpriſing to hear ſuch palliative arguments uſed in converſation: an author above referred to has been bold enough, in print, to reaſon in the ſame way. He ſays, "That no "abuſe was ever admitted on any ſtage, but might paſs "for perfect decency, when compared to what may have "been often heard of, at a goſſipping, a merry making, "or a meeting of young fellows*." Again, after telling us that we cannot hope to aboliſh the ſtage, he ſays, "And if we could, we ſhould only make way for the "return of drunkenneſs, gaming and rude cabals, which "the more decent converſation and manners of civilized "times have in a great manner aboliſhed." I lay hold of this gentleman's reaſoning, who pleads for civilizing the world, and not ſanctifying it, as a confeſſion of the weakneſs of his cauſe, and a confirmation of all the arguments produced in this treatiſe againſt the ſtage. For, if he meant to ſhow, that ſtage-plays were agreeable to the purity of the goſpel, that drunkenneſs is worſe (if indeed it be ſo) could be no evidence of it at all. He muſt therefore, if he ſpeaks to any purpoſe, plead for the toleration of ſinful diverſions, becauſe they are comparatively leſs

* Morality of Stage Plays ſeriouſly conſidered. p. 19.

ſinful than others; and if that is the caſe, I deteſt his principles, and ſo will every Chriſtian.

Having mentioned this author, perhaps it may be expected, that I would take ſome notice of the other arguments brought by him in defence of the ſtage. It is not eaſy either to enumerate or comprehend them, they are thrown together in ſuch confuſion, and expreſſed in ſuch vague and general terms. He ſays (page 3.) "The peo-
"ple of this iſland are not inferior to thoſe of any other
"age or country whatever. This will be a perſumption,
"that if plays are a poiſon, it is at leaſt but ſlow in its
"operation." And, p. 17. "We may venture to aſk,
"Whether knowledge, whether induſtry and commerce
"have declined in this city (Edinburgh) ſince the play-
"houſe was firſt opened here? It will be owned, that
"they have rather increaſed." I would venture to aſk, What ſort of an argument this is, and what follows from it, though both his aſſertions were allowed to be true, which yet may eaſily be in many reſpects controverted? If the ſtage, as he would inſinuate, be the cauſe of our improvement, then is his argument ſelf-contradictory, for we ought to be greatly inferior in purity to the people of other countries, who have enjoyed the reforming ſtage much longer, which is contrary to his ſuppoſition. The truth is, the ſtage is not the cauſe, but the conſequence of wealth; and it is neither the cauſe nor conſequence of goodneſs or knowledge, except ſo far as it certainly implies more knowledge than uncultivated ſavages poſſeſs, and is only to be found in what this author calls civilized nations. How eaſy were it for me to name ſeveral vices unknown to barbarians, which prevail in places of taſte and poliſhed manners. Should I at the ſame time inſinuate, that theſe vices have contributed to improve us in knowledge and taſte, it would be juſt ſuch an argument as is here uſed in favor of the ſtage, and the plain meaning of both is, the abuſe of knowledge is the cauſe of it.

It were worth while to conſider a little our improvements in knowledge in this age, which are often the boaſt of not the moſt knowing writers. Perhaps it may

be allowed, that there is now in the world a good deal of knowledge of different kinds, but it is plain we owe it to the labors of our predeceſſors, and not our own. And therefore, it is to be feared, we may improve it no better than many young men do, who come to the eaſy poſſeſſion of wealth of their fathers' getting. They neither know the worth nor the uſe of it, but ſquander it idly away, in the moſt unprofitable or hurtful purſuits. It is doubtleſs, an eaſy thing at preſent, to acquire a ſuperficial knowledge, from magazines, reviews, dictionaries, and other helps to the ſlothful ſtudent. He is now able, at a very ſmall expence, to join the beau and the ſcholar, and triumphs in the taſte of this enlightened age, of which he hath the comfort to reflect, that he himſelf makes a part. But for our mortification, let us recollect, that as ſeveral writers have obſerved, human things never continue long at a ſtand. There is commonly a revolution of knowledge and learning, as of riches and power. For as ſtates grow up from poverty to induſtry, wealth and power; ſo, from theſe they proceed to luxury and vice; and by them are brought back to poverty and ſubjection. In the ſame manner, with reſpect to learning, men riſe from ignorance to application; from application to knowledge; this ripens into taſte and judgment; then, from a deſire of diſtinguiſhing themſelves, they ſuperadd affected ornaments, become more fanciful than ſolid; their taſte corrupts with their manners, and they fall back into the gulph of ignorance. The ſeveral ſteps of theſe gradations commonly correſpond; and if we deſire to know in what period of each, we of this nation are at preſent, it is probable, we are in the age of luxury, as to the firſt, and in the eve at leaſt of a falſe and frothy taſte as to learning; and may therefore fear, that as a late very elegant writer expreſſes it, We ſhall relapſe faſt into barbariſm.

Another argument produced by this author, is, that the apoſtle Paul, in preaching at Athens, quotes a ſentence from one of the Greek poets, and, in writing to the Corinthians, has inſerted into the ſacred text a line from a Greek play, which now ſubſiſts.—" This (he ſays) is ſuf-

" ficient to connect the defence of plays with the honor of " ſcripture itſelf." The fact is not denied, though he has given but a poor ſpecimen of the knowledge of this age, by miſtaking in the firſt of theſe remarks, the expreſſion quoted by the apoſtle; for this ſentence, " in him we live, " and move, and have our being," which, he ſays, is a very ſublime expreſſion, and beautifully applied by the apoſtle, was not cited from the poet, but the following, " For we are alſo his offspring." But ſuppoſing he had (as he eaſily might) have hit upon the true citation, what follows from it? Did ever any body affirm, that no poet could write, or no player could ſpeak any thing that was true? And what is to hinder an inſpired writer from judging them out of their own mouths? What concern has this with the ſtage? If it implies any defence of the ſtage in general, it muſt imply a ſtronger defence of the particular play and poem, from which the citations are taken. Now, I dare ſay, neither this author, nor any other will aſſert, that theſe are in all reſpects agreeable to the Chriſtian character. Theſe citations do no other way connect the defence of the ſtage with the honor of ſcripture, than a miniſter's citing, in writing or diſcourſe, a paſſage from Horace or Juvenal, would connect the defence of all the obſcenity that is to be found in the reſt of their works, with the honor of preaching.

The only thing further in this eſſay not obviated in the preceding diſcourſe, is what he ſays on the ſubject of the poor. " That the expence laid out on the ſtage " does not hinder the charitable ſupply of the poor, and " that they ſuffer no loſs by it, for it comes at laſt into " the hands of the poor, and is paid as the price of their " labor.—Every player muſt be maintained, clothed " and lodged." It does not ſuit with my preſent purpoſe to enter into controverſial altercation, or to treat this author with that ſeverity he deſerves; and therefore I ſhall only ſay, that his reaſoning upon this ſubject is the very ſame from which Doctor Mandeville draws this abſurd and hated conſequence, "Private vices are pub- " lic benefits."

The truth is, a ſerious perſon can ſcarce have a ſtronger evidence of the immorality of the ſtage, than the peruſal of theſe little pieces of ſatire, which have been publiſhed, in ſo great a variety, againſt the preſbytery of Endinburgh, within theſe few weeks, becauſe of their public admonition againſt it. They offer no other defence, but deriding the preaching of the goſpel, blaſphemouſly comparing the pulpit with the ſtage, and recrimination upon ſome who are ſuppoſed to live inconſiſtently with their character. It is not worth while to ſpend three words in determining whether drunkenneſs, deceit and hypocriſy are worſe than the ſtage or not; but if that is the ſtrongeſt argument that can be offered in its ſupport, wo to all thoſe who attend it. The new reformed tragedy has indeed been very unlucky in its advocates. There is an old ſaying, that a man is known by his company. If this be true alſo of a play, which one would think it ſhould, as it muſt be chiefly to the taſte of congenial minds, by thoſe who have appeared in defence of Douglaſs, it is a work of very little merit.

It may be expected, that, having brought this performance on the field, I ſhould add ſome further reflections, upon the aggravated ſin of Miniſters writing plays, or attending the ſtage. But though it is a very plain point, and indeed becauſe it is ſo it would draw out this treatiſe to an immoderate length. If any man makes a queſtion of this, he muſt be wholly ignorant of the nature and importance of the miniſterial character and office. Theſe therefore it would be neceſſary to open diſtinctly, and to conſider the ſolemn charge given to miniſters in Scripture, to watch over the ſouls of their people, as thoſe "who muſt "give an account unto God;" to give themſelves wholly to their duty, ſince ſome of thoſe committed to them are from day to day, entering on an unchangeable ſtate, whoſe blood, when they die unconverted, ſhall be required at the hand of the unfaithful paſtor. None can entertain the leaſt doubt upon this ſubject, who believe the teſtimony of Moſes and the prophets, of Chriſt and his apoſtles, and, if they believe not their writings, neither will they believe my words.

Inſtead therefore of endeavoring to prove, I will make bold to affirm, that writing plays is an employment wholly foreign to the office, and attending theatrical repreſentations an entertainment unbecoming the character of a miniſter of Chriſt: And muſt not both, or either of them, be a ſacrilegious abſtraction of that time and pains, which ought to have been laid out for the benefit of his people? Is it not alſo flying in the face of a clear and late act of parliament, agreeably to which the lords of council and ſeſſion not long ago found the ſtage contrary to law in this country? And though the law is eluded, and the penalty evaded, by advertiſing a concert, after which will be performed, gratis, a tragedy, &c. Yet ſurely, the world in judging of characters, or a church court in judging of the conduct of its members, will pay no regard to the poor and ſhameful evaſion. Can we then think of this audacious attempt at the preſent juncture, without applying to ourſelves the words of Iſaiah, "And in that "day did the Lord God of hoſts call to weeping, and to "mourning, and to baldneſs, and to girding with ſack-"cloth, and behold joy and gladneſs, ſlaying oxen and "killing ſheep, eating fleſh and drinking wine; let us eat "and drink, for to-morrow we die. And it was revealed "in mine ears by the Lord of hoſts, ſurely this iniquity "ſhall not be purged from you till you die, ſaith the Lord "of hoſts," Iſa. xxii. 12, 13, 14.

A

LETTER

RESPECTING

PLAY ACTORS.

SIR,

THERE appeared in the national Gazette of the — of March laſt, a paſſage ſaid to be taken from a French publication, which no doubt the editor of the Gazette thought worthy of the public eye. It was to the following purpoſe:—It muſt appear very ſurpriſing that even down to the expiration of the French Monarchy, there was a character of diſgrace affixed to the profeſſion of a player, eſpecially when compared to the kindred profeſſions of preacher or pleader. Although the talents neceſſary to theſe occupations are as much inferior to thoſe of a good comedian, as the talents of a drug-pounding apothecary to thoſe of a regular bred phyſician, and that it is hoped that the recovery of the character due to theatrical merit, will contribute not a little to the improvement of future manners.

I have long expected to ſee ſome remarks publiſhed on this ſingular ſentiment, but, either nobody has thought it worthy of their attention, or the ſtrictures have not fallen in my way; therefore as this ſubject is not one of thoſe that loſe their importance or propriety by a ſhort lapſe of time; and as, on the contrary, the preſent controverſy in Philadelphia, on the application to the legiſlature againſt the ſtage, ſeems to render it peculiarly ſeaſonable, I beg the favor of you to publiſh the following obſervations:

The author of the paragraph publiſhed by Mr. Freneau, though a warm advocate for the theatre, vouches for me as to the fact that there has been a character of diſgrace for many ages, impreſſed upon the theatrical profeſſion. Though he had not affirmed it, the fact is undoubtedly certain, that the theatrical profeſſion has had a diſgrace affixed to it from the earlieſt times, and in all the countries where theatres have been in uſe.

Public actors on the ſtage were counted infamous by the Roman law, they were excommunicated by the church from the time of the introduction of chriſtianity into the Roman empire, even to the time mentioned by the author of the above paragraph, the expiration of the French monarchy.

If this had been only occaſional, local and temporary, It might have been conſidered as owing to ſome of thoſe accidental, but tranſient cauſes, which ſometimes produce remarkable effects for a little time, and then wholly ceaſe. But ſo uniform and ſo general an effect muſt have ſome adequate and permanent cauſe or cauſes to produce it—which is to be the ſubject of the preſent inquiry.

I have only to add as to the fact, that even the preſent living, warmeſt and moſt zealous advocates for the ſtage have not been able to efface this impreſſion from their own minds. There does not exiſt in Philadelphia, or any where elſe, any perſon of rank or character, who would be pleaſed with an alliance with the ſtage, either by their ſon's marriage with an actreſs, or by their daughters being married to actors.

Before entering into the principal part of the ſubject, it will be neceſſary that the reader ſhould give particular attention to the following remark. The infamy which has attended the profeſſion of players belongs wholly to the profeſſion itſelf, and not to the perſons, or rather circumſtances by which they may be diſtinguiſhed. Players when they are ſeen on the ſtage, are dreſſed in the fineſt habits, aſſume the manners, and ſpeak the language of kings and queens, princes and princeſſes, heroes and heroines, which is a very different ſituation from thoſe who belong to what are ſometimes called the lower claſſes of

life. Thoſe who follow the mechanic arts are ſometimes conſidered as in a ſtate of diſgrace, but it is wholly owing not to their profeſſion, but to the poverty and want of education of a great majority of them. The profeſſion is lawful, laudable, uſeful and neceſſary. Let me ſuppoſe a blackſmith, a weaver, a ſhoemaker, a carpenter, or any other of the mechanic profeſſions, and ſuppoſe that, by activity and induſtry he becomes wealthy, and inſtead of a work-ſhop, ſets up a factory; if he becomes rich early enough in life, to give his children a good education and a handſome fortune, tell me who is the perſon, who would refuſe his alliance or be aſhamed of his connexion? Is it not quite otherwiſe as to players, with whom though eminent in their profeſſion, as Moliere and Madamoiſelle Clairon in France, Garrick, Mrs. Siddons and Mrs. Bellamy in England, I believe there is hardly any example of any perſon of decent ſtation, or of middling fortune who would be ambitious of a family connexion. Therefore, I repeat it, and deſire it may be kept in view in the whole of this reaſoning, that the diſgrace impreſſed upon the character of players belongs to the profeſſion, and not to the perſon. Nay, though according to the old saying exceptio firmat regulam, there ſhould be an inſtance or two picked up in diſtant ages, in which ſuperlative merit, overcame the general prepoſſeſſion, ſuch as Roſcius in Rome, Moliere in France, and Shakeſpeare in England, this would not hinder the certainty or importance of the remark in general, of the opprobium that follows the profeſſion. I now proceed to the reaſons on which the fact is founded. Firſt, all powers and talents whatever, though excellent in themſelves, when they are applied to the ſingle purpoſe of anſwering the idle, vain, or vicious part of ſociety, become contemptible.

There is not upon record among the ſayings of bold men, one more remarkable than that of Sobrius, the tribune, to Nero the Roman emperor, when aſked by the emperor, why he who was one of his perſonal guards, had conſpired againſt him? He anſwered, I loved you as much as any man, as long as you deſerved to be loved, but I began to hate you when after the murder of your

wife and mother, you become a charioteer, a *comedian* and a buffoon. I am ſenſible that in this reaſoning I conſider theatrical pieces properly ſpeaking as intended for amuſement. I am not however ignorant that ſome have dignified them with the character of ſchools or leſſons of morality.

But as they have been generally called, and are ſtill called by the writers in the Philadelphia News-papers, *amuſements*, ſo I am confident every body muſt perceive that this was their original purpoſe, and will be their capital and their principal effect. It ſeems to me of conſequence in this argument to obſerve, that what is true of theatrical exhibitions is true of every other effect of human genius or art, when applied to the purpoſes of amuſement and folly, they become contemptible. Of all external accompliſhments, there is none that has been for many ages held in greater eſteem than good horſemanſhip. It has been ſaid that the human form never appears with greater dignity than when a handſome man appears on horſeback, with proper and elegant management of that noble creature. Yet when men employ themſelves in ſingular and whimſical feats, ſtanding inſtead of riding upon a horſe at full gallop, or upon two horſes at once, or other feats of the like nature, in order to amuſe the vain, and gather money from the fooliſh, it immediately appears contemptible. And for my own part, I would no more hold communication with a maſter of the circus than a manager of the theatre. And I ſhould be ſorry to be thought to have any intimacy with either the one or the other.

The general obſervation which I have made, applies to all human arts, of every kind and claſs. Muſic has always been eſteemed one of the fineſt arts, and was originally uſed in the worſhip of God, and the praiſe of heroes. Yet when muſic is applied to the purpoſes of amuſement only, it becomes wholly contemptible. And I believe the public performers, from the men-ſingers and women-ſingers of Solomon, to the ſingers in the preſent theatres, are conſidered as in a diſgraceful calling. I am happy to have even lord Cheſterfield on politeneſs, for my

aſſiſtant in this cauſe: for though he acknowledges muſic to be one of the fine arts, yet he thinks to be too great a connoiſſeur, and to be always fiddling and playing, is not conſiſtent with the character of a gentleman.

In the ſecond place, as players have been generally perſons of looſe morals, ſo their employment directly leads to the corruption of the heart. It is an allowed principle, among critics, that no human paſſion or character, can be well repreſented, unleſs it be felt: this they call entering into the ſpirit of the part. Now, I ſuppoſe the following philoſophical remark is equally certain, that every human paſſion, eſpecially when ſtrongly felt, gives a certain modification to the blood and ſpirits, and makes the whole frame more ſuſceptible of its return. Therefore, whoever has juſtly and ſtrongly acted human paſſions, that are vicious, will be more prone to theſe ſame paſſions; and indeed, with reſpect to the whole character, they will ſoon be in reality, what they have ſo often ſeemed to be.

This applies to the whole extent of theatrical repreſentation. Whoever has acted the part of a proud or revengeful perſon, I ſhould not like to fall in his way, when offended: and if any man has often acted the part of a rogue or deceiver, I ſhould not be willing to truſt him with my money. It may either be added, as another remark, or conſidered as a further illuſtration of the one laſt made, that players, by ſo frequently appearing in an aſſumed character, loſe all character of their own. Nothing, ſays an eminent and learned writer, "is more awkward "and inſipid, than a player, out of the line of his own "profeſſion." And indeed what muſt that memory and brain be, where the conſtant buſineſs of its poſſeſſor is to obliterate one ſcene or ſyſtem of folly, only to make way for another?

In the third place, I cannot help thinking, it is of ſome moment to obſerve, that players, in conſequence of their profeſſion, appearing continually in an aſſumed character, or being employed in preparing to aſſume it, muſt loſe all ſenſe of ſincerity and truth. Truth is ſo ſacred a thing, that even the leaſt violation of it, is not without its degree

of guilt and danger. It was far from being ſo abſurd as it often has been ſaid to be, what the old Spartan anſwered to an Athenian, who ſpoke to him of the fine leſſons found in their tragedies: 'I think I could learn virtue 'much better from our own rules of truth and juſtice, than 'by hearing your lies.'

I will here obſerve, that ſome very able and judicious perſons have given it as a ſerious and important advice to young perſons, to guard againſt mimicking and taking off others, as it is called, in language, voice, and geſture; becauſe it tends to deſtroy the ſimplicity and dignity of perſonal manners and behaviour. I myſelf, in early life, knew a young man of good talents, who abſolutely unfitted himſelf for public ſpeaking, by this practice. He was educated for the miniſtry, and was in every reſpect well qualified for the office; but having without ſuſpicion, frequently amuſed himſelf and others, by imitating the tones and geſtures of the moſt eminent preachers of the city where he lived, when he began to preach himſelf, he could not avoid falling into one or other of thoſe tones and manners which he had ſo often mimicked. This, as ſoon as it was perceived, threw the audience into a burſt of laughter, and he was ſoon obliged to quit the profeſſion altogether, for no other reaſon, than he had thus ſpoiled himſelf by the talent of imitation.—I may ſay further, in ſupport of this remark, that I have known no inſtance of one eminent for mimicking, who did not in time make himſelf contemptible.

But the human paſſion that makes the moſt conſpicuous figure in the theatre, is love. A play without intrigue and gallantry, would be no play at all. This paſſion is, of all others, that which has produced the greateſt degree of guilt and miſery, in the hiſtory of mankind. Now is it, or can it be denied, that actors in the theatre are trained up in the knowledge and exerciſe of this paſſion, in all its forms. It ſeems to have been a ſentiment of this kind, that led a certain author to ſay, that to ſend young people to the theatre to form their manners, is to expect, "that "they will learn virtue from profligates, and modeſty "from harlots."

Theſe remarks ſeem to me fully ſufficient to account for the diſgrace that has ſo generally followed the profeſſion of an actor. I ſhall only add a few words upon an opinion to be found in Werenfels and ſome other eminent authors. They condemn public theatres, and deſpiſe hired players: but they recommend acting pieces by young perſons, in ſchools or in private families, as a mean of obtaining grace and propriety in pronunciation. On this I ſhall juſt obſerve, that though this practice is much leſs dangerous than a public theatre, yet it does not ſeem to me to be of much neceſſity for obtaining the end propoſed. And I dare ſay, that if this practice were often repeated, the fame that may be acquired at ſuch exhibitions, would upon the whole, be of very little to the honor or benefit of thoſe who acquired it.

I will conclude this eſſay by an obſervation on the compariſon, made by the French writer, mentioned in the beginning, between the talents neceſſary to a good preacher or pleader, and thoſe neceſſary to a good play-actor. I wiſh he had mentioned the talents and qualifications, that we might have been able to examine his reaſoning. As for my own part, I can recollect but two which are eſſentially requiſite to a player, memory and mimickry; and I have known both theſe talents poſſeſſed in great perfection, by men who were not in underſtanding many degrees above fools; and on the contrary, ſome of the firſt men whom hiſtory records, that were no way remarkable in point of memory, and totally deſtitute of the other quality.

ECCLESIASTICAL CHARACTERISTICS:

OR, THE

ARCANA OF CHURCH POLICY.

BEING AN

HUMBLE ATTEMPT

TO OPEN THE

MYSTERY OF MODERATION.

WHEREIN IS SHEWN,

A plain and easy Way of attaining to the CHARACTER of a MODERATE MAN, as at present in repute in the CHURCH of SCOTLAND.

TO THE

DEPARTED GHOST,

OR

SURVIVING SPIRIT,

OF THE LATE

Reverend Mr. ———, Minister in ———.

WORTHY SIR,

DURING *a great part of the time I spent in composing the following treatise, I was fully resolved to have sent it abroad by itself, and not to have dedicated it to any person in the world; and indeed in a confined sense of the word* world, *you see I have still kept my resolution. The reason of this my intended purpose was, that I find the right honorable the earl of Shaftsbury, in an advertisement, or ticket, prefixed to his works, hath expressed a contempt and disdain of all dedications, prefaces, or other discourses, by way of forerunners to a book. This he seems to think a mean and cowardly way in an author, of creeping into the world, and begging the reception which he dares not claim.*

Being satisfied, therefore, of the justness of this observation, and being also somewhat confident (as his lordship seems to have been) of the intrinsic worth of my performance, I intended to have come forth in this masterly manner.

But, upon more mature deliberation, I discovered, that the only objections against dedications were the self-diffidence just now mentioned, and the suspicion of flattery for selfish ends, which is so contrary to disinterested benevolence; so that if I could frame

a dedication which should be quite beyond the imputation of any of these two purposes, I should then wholly escape his lordship's censure.

This aim, I think, I have fallen nothing short of, when I have dedicated this book to you, most illustrious SHADE! *as my most malignant enemies cannot but grant, that I could have no expectation of your encouraging me, either by buying my book, recommending it to others, or giving it away to the poor; nay, or even so much as for my translation to a better benefice in assembly or commission.*

It startled me a little, that this conduct might perhaps, by evil disposed persons, be represented as an approach to popery, and resembling their worshipping of saints: but I hope this can scarcely be imputed to me, in the present case, since you never were esteemed a saint while you lived, nor ever thirsted after that title.

Another more material objection occurred to me, That a dedication to a dead man, is either almost or altogether unprecedented. But I am not much concerned, though this method of proceeding should be thought bold and new, because this is the character which the incomparable Mr. —— gives of his own essays upon the principles of morality and natural religion. Besides, I am not altogether destitute of authority: for the memorable dean Swift has used the freedom to dedicate his Tale of a Tub to Prince Posterity. I have also seen a satirical poem, called Jure Divino, dedicated, with great solemnity, to Prince (or rather, I believe, to King) Reason. If, therefore, one of these authors might dedicate a book to a faculty of the human mind, and the other to an abstract idea, I hope it is no great presumption in me to dedicate mine to you, though "in statue mortuorum;" especially as there is not a living man who hath so good a claim to the compliment of a treatise upon my subject.

But a more gravelling difficulty than any of these, kept me some time in suspense, viz. how to get the

book presented to you. as I did not find in myself any inclination to depart this life in order to transport it. After much trouble, I was at length relieved, by reflecting, that Mr. Pope has assured us, that the ghosts of departed ladies always haunt the places in which they delighted while they were alive; and therefore, from analogy, it is to be supposed, that the same thing holds with regard to departed ministers. If this is the case, I look upon it as certain, that your chief residence is in the assembly-house at Edinburg, where you have, in your lifetime, both given and received so much pleasure. For though I will not limit you, in your unembodied state, from making circuits through the country, and visiting synods, or presbyteries, particularly in the M——se and G——y, where there are so many men after your own heart; yet, I dare say, you will not be absent from the assembly, nor any of the quarterly meetings of the commission, which hath so often saved the church from impending dangers.

It is therefore my purpose to go to Edinburgh in May next, when the assembly meets, of which I am a member, and there to lay before you my performance, hoping it will prove most delicious and savoury to all your senses, to the names of which, and the manner of their present operation, I am wholly a stranger.

It is probable you have not been accustomed, these two or three years past, to hear your own praises celebrated; and therefore I shall no farther launch out into them than to say, that there is not one branch of the character recommended in the following pages, in which you were not eminent; and that there never was one stone by you left unturned, for promoting the good cause.——That you may still sit upon the throne, and, by your powerful, though invisible influence, make the interest of moderation prevail, is the ardent wish, and the pious prayer of,

Sir,

Your most obedient
and admiring Servant.

THE

PREFACE.

GRATITUDE obligeth me to acknowledge the kind reception which the world hath given to the following generous effort, for the honor of our church. This ſhows, either that panegyric is by no means ſo unacceptable to mankind in general, as ſome ill-natured authors inſinuate; or that this of mine hath been executed with very uncommon ſkill. If this laſt ſhould be the true ſolution, it would give me a double ſatisfaction. However, as the love of detraction, in ſome perſons, is incurable, and as many have ſuch ulcerated minds, that there is no poſſibility of applying to them, even in the ſofteſt and moſt friendly manner, without offending them; to prevent the ſpreading of any ſuch baleful influence, I think it proper to add a few things upon the ſtructure of this performance; part of which ſhould have accompanied the firſt edition, if it had not pleaſed the publiſher to print it without any communication with the author.

From the beginning I foreſaw it would occur as an objection, that I have not properly denominated that party in the church which I have choſen to celebrate by the words *moderation* and *moderate men*. It is alledged that, for theſe two or three years paſt, they have made little uſe of theſe words, and having choſen rather to repreſent themſelves as ſupporters of the conſtitution, as acting upon conſtitutional principles, as lovers of order, and enemies to confuſion, &c. while at the very ſame time, the oppoſite party have taken up the title of *moderation* and pretend to be acting upon *moderate principles*. It is alſo hinted, that the juſt ſeverities which the times render neceſſary, require a different phraſeology.

In anſwer to this I obſerve, that my treatiſe has really been a work of time (as, I hope, appears from its maturity) the moſt part of it having been compoſed above two years ago, and before this change of language was introduced. It was originally intended only to exhibit a general view of the different parties in religion and learning among us; though it hath now admitted a very particular account of the lateſt and moſt recent differences in the church, chiefly becauſe *the preſent* ſeems likely to be an *æra* of ſome conſequence, and to be big with ſome very great events, as well as perſons. Beſides, I conſider, that this name of *moderate men* was much longer the deſignation of my friends, than thoſe lately invented; and as they do not even at preſent allow the claim of their enemies to that character, it is probable they intend to take it up again, as ſoon as the deſigns now upon the anvil ſhall be completely executed. As to the name of *moderation* being inconſiſtent with a proper vigor, in ſupport of their own meaſures, and wholeſome ſeverities againſt their enemies, it is an objection altogether frivolous, as appears from the following examples: A certain miniſter being aſked the character of a friend of his, who had come up to the aſſembly, and particularly whether or not he was a *moderate man?* anſwered, *O yes, fierce for moderation!*

I think it proper to inform the reader, that one great reaſon of the uncommon choice of a patron to this work was, an opinion I had long entertained, and in ſupport of which I could alledge very ſtrong arguments, from the ſayings of ſome great men and philoſophers, as well as the practice of a famous ancient nation, with regard to their kings; that the true and proper time of aſcertaining and fixing a man's character is when he has done his whole work; and that poſterity hath as good a right to the poſſeſſion and uſe of his fame after death, as his contemporaries to his abilities during his life. At the ſame time, though the author had a particular hero in view, yet he choſe to publiſh it without mentioning his name, or place of abode, or indeed any circumſtance foreign to the character which might diſtinguiſh the per-

ſon. The deſign of acting in this manner was, that in caſe the world ſhould univerſally agree to aſcribe it to the ſame perſon he had in his eye, it might be ſuch a juſtification of the truth of the character, as very few modern dedications can boaſt of.

This invention I challenge as wholly my own; and do hereby allow and recommend the uſe of it to all future authors, hoping it will change the faſhion among writers of character and ſelf-eſteem, from uſing no dedications at all, to forming them upon a plan entirely new. Let them each keep his patron in his eye, draw his character as exactly and graphically as poſſible, and publiſh it without a name, or with this inſcription *Detur dignissimo:* then if the world do univerſally aſcribe it to the perſon intended, let his name be prefixed to the ſecond edition; and it will be more true, and ſterling, and acceptable praiſe, than any hitherto found in that claſs of panegyrics. But if, on the contrary, the world ſhall aſcribe it to a different perſon, let the author acquieſce in that determination, rejoice in ſo good an expedient for preventing a blunder, and make his court to his new patron, who will hardly refuſe to admit him after ſo refined and delicate a compliment. I dare not recommend any thing like this method, with reſpect to the books already printed, becauſe it would occaſion ſo violent a controverſy about the propriety of many dedications, as could not be ended but by the ſword; they being moſt of them addreſſed to great men, who having agreed upon this method of revenging groſs affronts, and terminating, in the laſt reſort, all important diſputes. Should any aſk, why I have not followed my own rule, by now prefixing the name of my patron? They are to underſtand, that, for reaſons known to myſelf, I intend to defer it till the nineteenth or twentieth edition.

If any ſhall think fit to blame me, for writing in ſo bold and aſſuming a way, through the whole of my book, I anſwer, I have choſen it on purpoſe, as being the lateſt and moſt modern way of writing; and the ſucceſs it has already met with, is a demonſtration of its propriety and beauty. The ſame thing alſo, to my great ſatisfaction, is

a proof of the juſtice of a late author's ſcheme of Moral Philoſophy, who has expelled *mortification*, *ſelf-denial*, *humility*, and *ſilence*, from among the number of the virtues, and transferred them, as he expreſſeth himſelf, to the oppoſite column; that is to ſay, the column of VICES. This ſcheme, I dare ſay, will ſtand its ground; and, as a critic, I obſerve, that it was probably the ſingle circumſtance juſt now mentioned, that brought upon the author an adverſary who, though poſſeſſed of many truly good qualities, had the misfortune to be always eminent for modeſty, and other baſtard virtues of the ſame claſs.

There are ſome, I find, of opinion, that it was neither neceſſary nor uſeful for me, to give ſo many examples of the conduct of the moderate, in the illuſtration of the ſeveral maxims; and theſe eminent perſons themſelves ſeem to feel ſome pain, from the expoſing of their virtues to the public view. But is it not an eſtabliſhed truth, that example teaches better than precept? Is there any thing more uſual in moral writings, than to illuſtrate them by extracts from the lives of the philoſophers, and other heroes, of ancient times? and ſince the advantage of example is commonly ſaid to be, that it is a living law, or that it puts life into the precept, ſurely the beſt of all examples muſt be thoſe of perſons really and literally alive: neither ſhould ſuch perſons themſelves be offended with this conduct; ſince, as has been hinted above, *mortification* and *ſelf-denial*, are no more to be reckoned among the *virtues*, but the *vices*.

However, I have the comfort to reflect, that from the oppoſite opinions of thoſe who have paſſed their judgment on this performance, I am in the middle, and conſequently in the right: for there have been tranſmitted to me many noble inſtances of *moderation*, in expectation, no doubt, that they ſhould be added to my collection. I thankfully acknowledge my obligations to theſe kind contributors, but cannot make any uſe of their contributions at preſent; for it would, at leaſt, double the bulk of the treatiſe, and thereby render it *less commodious for pocket-carriage*. Further, I do aſſure them, it was not through want of materials that a greater number of examples was not produced, but from having duly weigh-

ed the proper proportion for a work of this extent; and to what hath been affixed with ſo much deliberation, I am reſolved ſtedfaſtly to adhere.

It were indeed to be wiſhed, that every man was left to himſelf, and allowed, in peace and quietneſs to finiſh his own work his own way: for I have ſeldom obſerved theſe things called *hints and ſuggeſtions*, to have any other effect than to perplex and miſlead. An author's ſituation, when perſecuted with them, ſeems to me to reſemble that of a gentleman building a houſe, or planning out a garden, who, if he hearkens to the advice, or attempts to gratify the taſte, of every viſitor, will, in all probability, produce, upon the whole, a collection of inconſiſtencies, a ſyſtem of deformity.

I am very ſorry to be obliged thus to ſpeak in obſcurity, by returning a public anſwer to private obſervations; but cannot omit taking notice, that it has been much wondered at, that a certain very eminent perſon has been loſt in the crowd of heroes, without any particular or diſtinguiſhing compliment paid to himſelf. Now, this did not by any means flow from a want of reſpect and eſteem, but from a diſtruſt of my own abilities, and a deſpair of being able to do juſtice to ſo illuſtrious a character. Neither indeed was there any great neceſſity (excepting mere compliment) of ſpreading his fame, which hath already gone both far and wide. Beſides, that his many and remarkable exploits, however ſtrong and *pregnant* proofs they may be of benevolence and ſocial affection, have ſome circumſtances attending them, which render them more proper ſubjects of diſcourſe than writing. The glare would be rather too great for even the ſtrong eye-ſight of this generation to endure, when brought very near them. The ſun is the moſt glorious of all objects in the firmament; and yet, though it were in the power of a painter to draw him in all his luſtre, there would hardly be found a proper place for him in the largeſt palace in Great-Britain.

The only other objection I ſhall take notice of, is, that in one reſpect, I may be ſaid to have drawn the picture larger than the life, in as much as I ſeem to ſuppoſe, that all moderate men do, in fact, poſſeſs every one of the vir-

tues which I have made to enter into the perfection of the character. This objection, though the one moſt inſiſted upon, is evidently both falſe and fooliſh. No reader, of true diſcernment can imagine any ſuch thing. If it were ſo, there would be no occaſion for my book at all; on the contrary, the various maxims inſerted in it, and the various examples produced in illuſtration of them, do ſhew that there are different degrees of perfection, even amongſt the moderate themſelves. They are a body, every member of which has neither the ſame abilities, nor the ſame office. They are alſo a body moſt firmly united, for mutual defence and ſupport: ſo much, I confeſs, I intended to intimate; and that, on this account, they are intitled to a ſort of community of goods, and mutual participation of each other's excellencies. A head may very well boaſt of the beauty, elegance and activity of the hands, or the comely proportion and ſtrength of the limbs belonging to it: and yet, though they are one body, it would be ridiculous to ſuppoſe, that the head or hands are always in the dirt, when they have the feet to carry them through it.

This metaphor of a body, however common, is one of the juſteſt and moſt ſignificative imaginable, out of which a very long allegory might be formed; but I ſhall proſecute it no farther at this time, except to acknowledge, that it convinces me of one real omiſſion in my plan, viz. that what hath been juſt now hinted, I ought to have inſerted as a *thirteenth maxim*, and illuſtrated it at large.* It would have been eaſy to ſhow, that the moderate are remarkable for the moſt perfect union and harmony, and for a firm and ſtedfaſt adherence to each other, in the proſecution of their deſigns. Neither is there any inſtance in which there is a ſtronger contraſt or oppoſition between them and the orthodox; as manifeſtly appeared from the conduct of both parties in the General Aſſembly 1753. A friend of ours called the enemy, upon that occaſion, *a parcel of conscientious fools:* had he then read the following maxims, which prove, that they have as little *conſcience* as *wisdom*, it is probable he would have beſtowed on them their *true* and proper character.

* This was done in the third edition.

ECCLESIASTICAL

CHARACTERISTICS.

INTRODUCTION.

THE reader will doubtleſs agree with me, that moderation is an excellent thing, and particularly the nobleſt character of a church-man. It is alſo well known, that as all churches have uſually in them a moderate, and a zealous, high-flying, wild party; ſo our church hath at preſent a certain party, who glory in, and fight for moderation; and who (it is to be hoped juſtly) appropriate to themſelves wholly the character of moderate men: neither is it a ſmall preſage of a glorious and bleſſed ſtate of the church, in its approaching periods, that ſo many of our young men are ſmitten with the love of moderation, and generally burn with deſire to appear in that noble and divine character.

This hath inſpired me with the ambition and expectation of being helpful in training up as many as are deſirous of it, in this moſt uſeful of all ſciences. For however perfectly it is known, and however ſteadily practiſed by many who are adepts; and notwithſtanding there are ſome young men, of pregnant parts, who make a ſudden and ſurpriſing proficiency, without much aſſiſtance; yet I have often obſerved, that there are ſeveral perſons, who err, in many inſtances, from the right path, boggle at ſun-

dry particular steps of their leaders, and take a long time before they are thoroughly confirmed in their principles and practice. The same persons also, by an unstable conduct, or by an imprudent or unseasonable discovery of their designs, have brought a reproach upon their party, and been an obstruction to whatever work they had then in hand.

These bad effects, I humbly conceive, flow chiefly, if not only, from the want of a complete system of moderation, containing all the principles of it, and giving a distinct view of their mutual influence one upon another, as well as proving their reasonableness, and showing, by examples, how they ought to be put in practice.

There is no work of this kind, to my knowledge, yet extant, which renders my present undertaking of it the more laudible, and will, I hope, render it the more acceptable.

I must inform the reader, that after I was fully convinced of the necessity of some such piece as what follows, but before I entered upon it myself, I earnestly intreated several of the most eminent men of the moderate stamp among us, those burning and shining lights of our church, who are, and are esteemed to be, our leaders, that some of them would set about it. However, they all devolved it upon me; and made this satisfying excuse for themselves, that they were so busied in acting moderation, that they could not have time to write upon it. This soon led me to think, what would become of many noble designs, and what advantage our discontented zealots might take, if any of the expert steersmen of this ecclesiastical vessel of ours should retire from the helm; but so long time as would be necessary to bring a work of such a nature, to the perfection in strength, symmetry, and elegance, that the reader will perceive even this of mine is arrived at.

I shall now proceed to the principal part of the work, after I have informed the reader of the plan of it; which is briefly this, to enumerate distinctly and in their proper order and connexion, all the several maxims upon which moderate men conduct themselves: and foraf-

much as the juſtice of many of them, being refined pieces of policy, is not very evident at firſt ſight, I ſhall ſubjoin to each an illuſtration and confirmation of it, from reaſon or experience, or both. N. B. I ſhall make but very little uſe of Scripture, becauſe that is contrary to ſome of the maxims themſelves; as will be ſeen in the ſequel.

MAXIM I.

All eccleſiaſtical perſons, of whatever rank, whether principals of colleges, profeſſors of divinity, miniſters, or even probationers, that are ſuſpected of hereſy, are to be eſteemed men of great genius, vaſt learning, and uncommon worth; and are, by all means, to be ſupported and protected.

ALL moderate men have a kind of fellow-feeling with hereſy, and as ſoon as they hear of any one ſuſpected, or in danger of being proſecuted for it, zealouſly and unanimouſly riſe up in his defence. This fact is unqueſtionable. I never knew a moderate man in my life, that did not love and honor a heretic, or that had not an implacable hatred at the perſons and characters of hereſy-hunters; a name with which we have thought proper to ſtigmatize theſe ſons of Belial, who begin and carry on proſecutions againſt men for hereſy in church-courts.

It is related of the apoſtle John, and an ugly ſtory it is, that upon going into a public bath, and obſerving the heretic Cerinthus there before him, he retired with the utmoſt precipitation, leſt the edifice ſhould fall, and cruſh him, when in company with ſuch an enemy of the truth. If the ſtory be true, the apoſtle's conduct was ridiculous and wild; but Dr. Middleton has ſhown that the ſtory is not true; and indeed, the known benevolence and charity of John's writings make it highly probable. However, not to enter into that controverſy, whether it be true or not, the conduct of all moderate men is directly oppoſite.

As to the juſtice of this maxim, many ſolid reaſons may be given for it.——Compaſſion itſelf, which is one of the fineſt and moſt benevolent feelings of the human heart, moves them to the relief of their diſtreſſed brother.——Another very plain reaſon may be given for it: moderate men are, by their very name and conſtitution, the reverſe, in all reſpects, of bigotted zealots. Now, it is well known, that many of this laſt ſort, both clergy and common people, when they hear of a man ſuſpected of hereſy, conceive an averſion at him, even before they know any thing of the caſe; nor after he is acquitted (as they are all of them commonly in our church-courts) can they ever come to entertain a favorable opinion of him. The reverſe of this then is, to be as early and as vigorous in his defence, as they are in his proſecution, and as implicit in our belief of his orthodoxy, as they are in their belief of his error.

I remember, when I was diſcourſing once to this purpoſe, a certain raw unexperienced perſon ſaid, he had always thought, that not moderation, but lukewarmneſs and indifference to truth, was the reverſe of exceſſive zeal; and that moderation was ſituated in the middle betwixt the two. To whom I anſwered, Young man you do not reflect, that no fierce man can be reſiſted but by one as fierce, nor overcome but by one fiercer than himſelf; if, therefore, no body would oppoſe the zealots, but ſuch calm midſmen as you mention, in every ſuch inſtance the balance of power muſt lean to their ſide, and the poor heretic muſt fall a ſacrifice, to the no ſmall detriment of the cauſe of moderation; which by the bye, is commonly ſupported by the heretics in their ſtations, and therefore they deſerve a grateful return.

This brings to my mind another reaſon for the maxim, viz. That heretics being ſo nearly related to the moderate men, have a right to claim their protection out of friendſhip and perſonal regard. This ſerves a very noble end; for it vindicates the Chriſtian religion from the objection of ſome infidels, who affirm that it does not recommend private friendſhip; now moderate men having all a very great regard to private friendſhip, and

perſonal connexions, do, by their practice, which is the moſt ſolid way, confute this ſlander.

I may add to theſe another argument for the great character of heretics, as aſſerted in the maxim, which I picked up from the preaching of a feceding miniſter. He told his hearers, that when the devil looks out for an inſtrument to propagate error, he never makes choice of a weak ſilly man, but one able and learned; as well knowing, I ſuppoſe, that though God can ſupport his cauſe by any inſtrument whatever, yet he needs always the beſt and moſt ſufficient he can get. Now, though I hope no man will reckon me of this fanatic's principles, ſo far as to think the devil the ſource of error; yet the citation ſerves my purpoſe, as it ſhews that he himſelf was convinced of the ability and learning of heretics; and all the world knows, that the teſtimony of an enemy is the ſtrongeſt of all evidences upon a man's ſide.

I ſhall conclude this maxim with obſerving, that ſuch tenderneſs for heretics, however due from ſome, is yet, in many of the moderate character, an inſtance of the moſt heroic and generous friendſhip. It is quite diſintereſted, as they themſelves run not the ſmalleſt hazard of ever being in the like circumſtances. Heretics are commonly an honeſt ſort of people, but with all their book learning, of no great ſtock of prudence or policy. They publiſh and aſſert whatever they believe upon all points, without conſidering the reception it is like to meet with, from thoſe of oppoſite principles. They affront the public to its face, which Lord Shaftſbury tells us ought not to be done. On the other hand, men thorough-paced in moderation, diſcover their principles only at ſuch times, and to ſuch perſons, as are able to bear them. By this means they preſerve themſelves from hereſy; and indeed they cannot poſſibly fall into it, unleſs by miſtake; in which caſe, as ſoon as they are challenged, (if it is like to be attended with any temporal inconveniency) they deny it, explain it away, or repent, and aſk pardon.

In all this they follow the noble example of Mr.——— who, in the aſſembly debates, upon Profeſſor Simſon's affair, happening to ſay ſomething that was challenged

by one present as heresy, immediately replied, "Moderator, if that be heresy, I renounce it."

MAXIM II.

When any man is charged with loose practices, or tendencies to immorality, he is to be screened and protected as much as possible; especially if the faults laid to his charge be, as they are incomparably well termed in a sermon, preached by a hopeful youth that made some noise lately, "good humored vices."

THE reason upon which this maxim is founded, may be taken from the reasons of the former, "mutatis mutandis;" there being scarcely any of them that does not hold equally in both cases. A libertine is a kind of practical heretic, and is to be treated as such. Dr. Tillotson observes, in one of his sermons, that the worst, of all heresies is a bad life; now, if instead of worst, which is an uncomely expression, you would read greatest, in that passage, then a libertine is the greatest of all heretics, and to be honored in proportion. Even the apostle Paul (who is very seldom of any use to us in our reasonings) seems to suppose, that they are men of most knowledge, who are most free and bold in their practice; and that they are only weak brethren, who are filled with scruples. The weak man is restrained and confirmed by his narrow conscience; but the strong man believeth that he may EAT, and, by parity of reason, DRINK all things.

In order to understand the nature of "good-humored vices," the reader may please to take notice, that it is an observation of Lord Shaftsbury, that "the best time for thinking upon religious subjects, is when a man is merry, and in good humor:" and so far is this observation drawn from nature, that it is the time commonly chosen for that purpose, by many who never heard of his lordship, or his writings. Whatever, therefore, serves to promote merriment, and heighten good humor, must so far serve for the discovery of religious truth. But as there are many ways of making a person merry, which narrow-minded

people will call vice; from thence, in compliance with common language, arises the new compound "good-"humored vices." It is not, however, so to be understood, as if either the inventor of it, or those who love and patronize him, mean any thing by it but what is, "in "their apprehension," both innocent and laudable.

Let it also be observed, that as gravity is almost a necessary consequence of solitude, "good-humored vices" are certainly "social pleasures," and such as flow from, and show benevolence; and this is an affection for which our whole fraternity have the highest regard, insomuch that no surer mark can be taken of a man's being ONE OF US, than the frequent returns of this expression in his discourses or writings.

It will serve further for the support of this maxim, that according to modern discoveries, there is a great analogy between the "moral virtues," or, if you will, the "sci-"ence of morals," and the "fine arts:" and it is on account of this analogy, that most of the present reigning expressions upon the subject of morals, are borrowed from the arts, as "beauty, order, proportion, harmony, de-"cency," &c. It is also established long since, and well known as a principle in the fine arts, that a certain freedom and boldness of manner is what chiefly constitutes grace and beauty. Why then should not approbation be founded upon the same grounds in both cases? Why should not a bold practice be as beautiful in real, as a bold hand is in imitated life? especially as all great geniuses have actually laid claim to this as their peculiar privilege, not to be confined to common forms; and that in opposition to the bulk of mankind, who through want of taste, are not able to relish the finest performances in any of the kinds.

I must not, however, omit taking notice, to prevent mistakes, of one exception that must be made from this maxim; that is that when the person to whose charge any faults are laid, is reputed orthodox in his principles, in the common acceptation of that word, or comes in by orthodox influence, in that case they are all to be taken for granted as true, and the evil of them set forth in the

livelieſt colours. In conſequence of this, he is to be proſecuted and torn to pieces on account of theſe crimes. But if it ſo happen, that he cannot be convicted upon a trial, then it is beſt to make uſe of things as they really are; that is, to expreſs ſuſpicions, to give ingenious and dubious hints, and, if poſſible, ruin him without any trial at all. There was a noble example of this given a few years ago, in the caſe of a ſettlement in the bounds of a preſbytery, very many of whom are eminent in moderation. In that caſe, there were ſeveral faults laid to the charge of the candidate; and yet, though he himſelf very much inſiſted upon an inquiry into their truth, and a judgment upon their relevancy, the preſbytery wiſely refuſed to do either the one or the other, but left them to have their own natural weight in fame, rumour, and converſation.

The neceſſity of this exception is very evident: for, in the ſuppoſed caſe, all the reaſons for protection to the young man fail; to ſatisfy himſelf of which, let the reader view theſe reaſons, as they are annexed to the firſt maxim, and ſave my book from the deformity of repetition.

MAXIM III.

It is a neceſſary part of the character of a moderate man, never to ſpeak of the Confeſſion of Faith but with a ſneer; to give ſly hints, that he does not thoroughly believe it; and to make the word orthodoxy a term of contempt and reproach.

The Confeſſion of Faith, which we are now all laid under a diſagreeable neceſſity to ſubſcribe, was framed in times of hot religious zeal; and therefore it can hardly be ſuppoſed to contain any thing agreeable to our ſentiments in theſe cool and refreſhing days of moderation. So true is this, that I do not remember to have heard any moderate man ſpeak well of it, or recommend it, in a ſermon, or private diſcourſe, in my time. And, indeed, nothing can be more ridiculous, than to make a fixed ſtandard for opinions, which change juſt as the faſhions of

clothes and dress. No complete system can be settled for all ages, except the maxims I am now compiling and illustrating, and their great perfection lies in their being ambulatory, so that they may be applied differently, with the change of times.

Upon this head some may be ready to object, That if the Confession of Faith be built upon the sacred Scriptures, then, change what will, it cannot, as the foundation upon which it rests, remains always firm and the same. In answer to this, I beg leave to make a very new, and therefore striking comparison: When a lady looks at a mirror, she sees herself in a certain attitude and dress, but in her native beauty and colour; should her eye, on a sudden, be tinctured with the jaundice, she sees herself all yellow and spotted; yet the mirror remains the same faithful mirror still, and the alteration arises not from it, but from the object that looks at it. I beg leave to make another comparison: When an old philosopher looked at the evening-star, he beheld nothing but a little twinkling orb, round and regular like the rest; but when a modern views it with a telescope, he talks of phases, and horns, and mountains, and what not; now this arises not from any alteration in the star, but from his superior assistance in looking at it. The application of both these similitudes I leave to the reader.

But besides these general reasons, there is one very strong particular reason why moderate men cannot love the Confession of Faith; moderation evidently implies a large share of charity, and consequently a good and favorable opinion of those that differ from our church; but a rigid adherence to the Confession of Faith, and high esteem of it, nearly borders upon, or gives great suspicion of harsh opinions of those that differ from us: and does not experience rise up and ratify this observation? Who are the narrow-minded, bigotted, uncharitable persons among us? Who are the severe censurers of those that differ in judgment? Who are the damners of the adorable Heathens, Socrates, Plato, Marcus Antonius, &c.? In fine, who are the persecutors of the inimitable heretics among ourselves? Who but the admirers of this an-

tiquated compoſition, who pin their faith to other men's ſleeves, and will not endure one jot leſs or different belief from what their fathers had before them! It is therefore plain, that the moderate man, who deſires to incloſe all intelligent beings in one benevolent embrace, muſt have an utter abhorrence at that vile hedge of diſtinction, the Confeſſion of Faith.

I ſhall briefly mention a trifling objection to this part of our character.—That by our ſubſcription we ſacrifice ſincerity, the queen of virtues, to private gain and advantage. To which I anſwer, in the firſt place, That the objection proves too much, and therefore muſt be falſe, and can prove nothing: for, allowing the juſtice of the objection, it would follow, that a vaſt number, perhaps a majority, of the clergy of the church of England are villains; their printed ſermons being, many of them, diametrically oppoſite to the articles which they ſubſcribe. Now, as this ſuppoſition can never be admitted by any charitable man, the objection from whence it flows, as a neceſſary conſequence, muſt fall to the ground.

But further, what is there more inſincere in our ſubſcriptions, than in thoſe expreſſions of compliment and civility, which all acknowledge lawful, although they rarely expreſs the meaning of the heart! The deſign is ſufficiently underſtood in both caſes; and our ſubſcriptions have this advantage above forms of compliment, in point of honeſty, that we are at a great deal of pains uſually to perſuade the world that we do not believe what we ſign; whereas the complaiſant gentleman is very ſeldom at any pains about the matter.

What is ſaid might ſuffice in ſo clear a caſe; but I am here able to give a proof of the improvement of the age, by communicating to the reader a new way of ſubſcribing the Confeſſion of Faith, in a perfect conſiſtency with ſincerity, if that be thought of any conſequence: it is taken from the method of atteſting ſome of our gentlemen elders to the general aſſembly. Many inſiſt, that they ought to be atteſted, and do atteſt them, as qualified in all reſpects, if the atteſtors are wholly ignorant about the matter; becauſe, in that caſe, there is no evidence to the con-

trary, and the presumption ought to lie on the favorable side. Now, as every new discovery should be applied to all the purposes for which it may be useful, let this method be adopted by the intrants into the ministry, and applied to their subscription of the Confession of Faith. Nothing is more easy than for them to keep themselves wholly ignorant of what it contains; and then they may, with a good conscience, subscribe it as true, because it ought to be so.

MAXIM IV.

A good preacher must not only have all the above and subsequent principles of moderation in him, as the source of every thing that is good; but must, over and above, have the following special marks and signs of a talent for preaching. 1. His subjects must be confined to social duties. 2. He must recommend them only from rational considerations, viz. the beauty and comely proportions of virtue, and its advantages in the present life, without any regard to a future state of more extended self-interest. 3. His authorities must be drawn from heathen writers, *none*, or as few as possible, from Scripture. 4. He must be very unacceptable to the common people.

THESE four marks of a good preacher, or rules for preaching well (for they serve equally for both purposes) I shall endeavor distinctly to illustrate and confirm, that this important branch of my subject may be fully understood.

As to the first of these rules, That a preacher's subjects must be confined to "social duties," it is quite necessary in a moderate man, because his moderation teaches him to avoid all the high flights of evangelic enthusiasm, and the mysteries of grace, which the common people are so fond of. It may be observed, nay, it is observed, that all of our stamp, avoid the word grace as much as possible, and have agreed to substitute the "moral virtues" in the room of the "graces of the spirit," which is the orthodox expression. And indeed it is not in this only, but in all

other cafes, that we endeavor to improve the phrafeology, and fhow, that befides fentiment, even in language itfelf, we are far fuperior to, and wifer than our fathers before us. I could fhow this by a great many examples, but that it would be too tedious; and therefore only add, to the one mentioned above, that where an ancient orthodox man, or even an old fafhioned modern, that thinks religion can never be amended, either in matter or manner, would have faid "a great degree of fanctification," a man of moderation and politenefs will fay, "a high pitch of "virtue." Now, as this is the cafe, it is plain a moderate preacher muft confine his fubjects to focial duties chiefly, and not infift on fuch paffages of Scripture as will by the very repetition of them, contaminate his ftyle, and may perhaps diffufe a rank fmell of orthodoxy through the whole of his difcourfe.

After all, I cannot refufe, that it is ftill a more excellent way, for thofe who have talents equal to the undertaking, to feize an orthodox text, explain it quite away from its ordinary fenfe, and conftrain it to fpeak the main parts of our own fcheme. Thus a noble champion of ours chofe once for his fubject, Rom. viii. 2. "For the "law of the Spirit of life, in Chrift Jefus, hath made me "free from the law of fin and death:" which he explained in this manner; "the law of the Spirit of life," that is, the moral fenfe—; "in Chrift Jefus—," which is the fum of the Chriftian religion, &c. The advantage of this way is, that it is tearing the weapons out of the hands of the orthodox, and turning them againft themfelves. And it may perhaps, in time, have the effect to make our hearers affix our fenfe to their beloved Scriptures; or at leaft, which is the next thing, prevent them from being able to find any other.—However, I muft acknowledge, that this way of doing is not for every man's management; and therefore I continue my advice to the generality, ftill to adhere to the rule as firft delivered.

The fecond rule will be eafily confirmed. That duties are to be recommended only from "rational confidera-"tions." What can be imagined more fooliſh than to contradict this? If there be any thing in a fermon dif-

ferent from rational conſiderations, it muſt be irrational, that is to ſay, abſurd. It is in this part of our ſcheme that we moderate men obtain a glorious triumph over our adverſaries and deſpiſers. Who but muſt ſmile, when they hear the contemptible, vulgar, ignorant, hot-headed country elders, or ſilly women, led captive by them at their will, ſaying, they do not love this rational way of going to heaven!

But to explain this method a little further, the rational way of preaching is ſometimes ſet in oppoſition to the pathetic way of raiſing the paſſions. This laſt is what we greatly diſapprove of; there is ſomething immoderate in the very idea of raiſing the paſſions; and therefore it is contrary to our character: nor was it ever known that a truly moderate man raiſed or moved any affection in his hearers, unleſs perhaps the affection of anger againſt himſelf. We leave that to your vehement bawlers, or your whining lamenters, that are continually telling, "they "will ſpend and be ſpent" for the ſalvation of their hearers, which Lord Shaftſbury elegantly derides, by calling it "the heroic paſſion of ſaving ſouls." And let any unprejudiced perſon judge, whether there is not ſomething vaſtly great, ſomething like an heroic fortitude in that man, that can talk of future judgment, heaven and hell, with as much coolneſs and indifference as if it were a common matter. To ſay the truth, indeed, we do not often meddle with theſe alarming themes. However, as I obſerved upon the firſt mark of a good preacher, that it is glorious to rob the orthodox of a text, and make it bend to our plan; ſo it is alſo an uncommon excellence to treat theſe ſubjects with calmneſs, and to prove that we ought to do ſo. Thus a great proficient in our way, lately preaching upon Acts xxiv. 25. where Paul made Felix to tremble by his diſcourſe, proved from it, that miniſters ought not to raiſe the paſſions of their hearers. An ignorant obſerver would have thought that the paſſion of terror was raiſed in Felix to a great degree, and that he was little better than a Cambuſlang convict. But mark the lucky expreſſion our hero got hold of: "As he reaſoned

" of righteouſneſs," &c. as he reaſoned, that is, argued, and proved by rational conſiderations.

This example gives me a fine opportunity of making a kind of contraſt, and ſhewing from fact, the difference between an orthodox and a moderate preacher. I myſelf heard one of the firſt kind, upon the text juſt now mentioned; and his firſt obſervation was, That the apoſtle Paul was a faithful " reprover;" ſpeaking home to Felix, 1. Of " righteouſneſs;" to convince him of any iniquity he had been guilty of in his government. 2. Of " tempe- " rance;" which he ſaid ſhould be tranſlated " conti- " nence," and was probably intended as a reproof to him and Druſilla, who were living in adultery. His next, and main obſervation was, That Felix was " convicted," but " ſtifled" his convictions, and delayed his repentance, ſaying, " Go thy way for this time; when I have a con- " venient ſeaſon, I will call for thee." Then followed a great deal of ſtuff, which I do not incline to tranſcribe; but it was juſt what the vulgar call experimental preaching, I ſuppoſe to diſtinguiſh it from rational.

But how contrary to this did our moderate friend? He firſt obſerved, that St. Paul was a " moral," or a " legal " preacher;" diſcourſing of " righteouſneſs" and " tem- " perance," without a word of " faith:" and then, that he was a " reaſoning preacher," that did not ſtrive to raiſe people's paſſions, but informed their judgment. I was indeed a little diſappointed upon conſulting the original, to find that the word uſed, which is *dialegomenou*, ſignifies only " continuing his diſcourſe," and ſo might be either in the " reaſoning" or " pathetic" way; but I was ſatisfied by reflecting, that the word evidently includes both; and ſo " reaſoning" being the beſt, it is to be ſuppoſed the apoſtle preferred it.

Agreeably to this rule, Lord Shaftſbury, and after him a bright luminary in our own church, gives an advice to all moderate clergymen, not to affect that idle title of " ambaſſadors," or " plenipotentiaries from heaven," ſo fondly claimed by zealots; and I take the liberty to ſuppoſe, that the reaſon of the advice was the ſame in both, viz. " That under this character zealots put on an air of

" authority, and deliver their meſſage with a pathos, to " which they would otherwiſe have been ſtrangers." His lordſhip indeed explodes the conceit ſufficiently; he aſks, " Gentlemen, where is your commiſſion? how has it been " conveyed? where are the letters patent? where the " credentials?" with many more queſtions, eaſier for his lordſhip to aſk, than for SOME PERSONS to anſwer.

The third rule, viz. recommending " virtue," from the authority and examples of the Heathens, is not only highly proper, becauſe they were very virtuous, but hath this manifeſt advantage attending it, that it is a proper way of reaſoning to two quite oppoſite kinds of perſons. One is, ſuch as are real Chriſtians, who will be aſhamed by the ſuperior excellence of mere Heathens, as they call them, and whom they ſo much deſpiſe. The other is, our preſent living heathens, who pay no regard to the Chriſtian religion at all; and therefore will only be moved by the authority of the perſons they eſteem. It is well known, there are multitudes in our iſland, who reckon Socrates and Plato to have been much greater men than any of the apoſtles, although, as the moderate preacher I mentioned lately told his hearers) the apoſtle Paul had an univerſity-education, and was inſtructed in logic by profeſſor Gamaliel. Therefore let religion be conſtantly and uniformly called " virtue," and let the Heathen philoſophers be ſet up as the great patterns and promoters of it. Upon this head, I muſt particularly recommend M. Antoninus by name, becauſe an eminent perſon of the moderate character ſays, his meditations is the BEST book that ever was written for forming the heart.

But perhaps the laſt part of this third rule will be thought to need moſt illuſtration and defence, viz. That none at all, " or very little uſe is to be made of Scripture." And really, to deal plainly, the great reaſon of this is, that very few of the Scripture motives and arguments are of the moderate ſtamp; the moſt part of them are drawn from orthodox principles: for example, the apoſtle Paul cannot even ſay, " Huſbands, love your wives," but his argument and example comes in theſe words, " as Chriſt " alſo loved the church." The apoſtle John alſo ſpeaks

in a very myſterious way, of union with Chriſt, and abiding in him, in order to bring forth fruit, which is his way of ſpeaking for a virtuous life. Now, let any indifferent perſon judge, how this kind of expreſſion, and others of a like nature, ſuch as mortifying the deeds of the body through the Spirit, would agree with the other parts of our diſcourſes: they would be like oppoſite kinds of fluids which will not compound; they would be quite heterogeneous, which is againſt all the rules of fine writing, and hinders it from being an uniform, beautiful, and comely whole. Horace, in his Art of Poetry, gives this as his very firſt obſervation,

> "Humano capiti cervicem pictor equinam
> "Jungere ſi velit"———————

Which my learned reader cannot fail both to remember and underſtand, and which I deſire him to apply to this ſubject we are now upon. If it be ſaid, that ſermons are not poems, and therefore not to be compoſed by the rules of poetry: I anſwer, it is a miſtake; many of our ſermons, eſpecially thoſe compoſed by the younger ſort among us, are poems; at leaſt they are full of poetical flights, which comes much to the ſame thing: not to mention that the rule agrees equally to proſe and poetry. How often have I heard parts of Mr. Addiſon's Cato, Young's Night-Thoughts, and divers other poems, in ſermons? and, to ſay the truth, they were none of the worſt parts of them. However, I would offer my advice, as that of a perſon of ſome experience, to all young preachers, not to do Dr. Young the honor of borrowing any thing from him again, becauſe he is a ſnarling, ſullen, gloomy, melancholy mortal, cites a great deal of ſcripture; and particularly, becauſe he has given a vile ſneer at the practice I am juſt now recommending, in the following two lines of his Univerſal Paſſion.

> When doctors Scripture for the claſſics quit,
> Polite apoſtates from God's grace to wit.

I have only another advice to give upon this head, and that is, That when our young preachers think proper to

borrow from modern printed poems, they would be pleased to transpose them a little, so to speak, that they may not be too easily discerned by young gentlemen who read the magazines. However, I am in great hopes we shall shortly be quite above the necessity of borrowing from any body, in order to make our sermons poetry: there are some persons of genius among us, that can make very good poetry of their own; of which I could produce some recent instances; but I do not think it at present expedient.

The fourth and last rule for a preacher, is, that he must be "very unacceptable to the people." The Spectator, I remember, some where says, that most of the critics in Great-Britain seem to act as if the first rule of dramatic writing were "not to please." Now, what they make the first rule of writing plays, I make the last rule for composing sermons; not as being the least, but the most important. It is indeed the grand criterion, the most indispensable rule of all. Though one should pretend to adhere to all the former rules, and be wanting in this alone, he would be no more than "a sounding brass, or a tink-"ling cymbal;" pardon the expression, the importance of the matter requireth it. I shall put a case: suppose a man should have the approbation of the very best judges, viz. Those whose taste we ourselves allow to be good, if at the same time he happens to be acceptable to the common people, it is a sign that he must have some subtile refined fault, which has escaped the observation of the good judges aforesaid; for there is no man even of our own fraternity, so perfect and uniform in judging right, as the common people are in judging wrong.

I hope there is little need of assigning reasons for this great characteristic of the art of preaching; I suppose it will be allowed to be, if not altogether, at least next to self-evident: all the several reasons that have been given for the particular maxims of moderation, concur in establishing this; for the people are all declared enemies of moderation, in its principles and practice; and therefore if moderation be right, they must be wrong. There is a known story of a Heathen orator, who, when the com-

mon people gave a ſhout of applauſe, during his pronouncing an oration, immediately turned about to a friend, and aſked him, what miſtake he had committed. Now if an audience of vulgar Heathens was allowed to be ſo infallibly wrong in their judgment, the ſame thing muſt hold, "a fortiori," in an audience of vulgar Chriſtians.

From this it evidently follows, that a popular preacher eſſentially ſignifies a bad preacher; and it is always ſo underſtood by us, whenever we uſe the expreſſion. If we but hear it reported of any one, that he is very popular among the lower ſort, we are under no difficulty of giving his character, without having heard him preach ourſelves. In this caſe, fame is a certain guide to truth, by being inverted; for we deteſt and deſpiſe him, preciſely in the ſame proportion that the people admire him. On the other hand, the truly moderate man is not only above the applauſe of the multitude, but he glories in their hatred, and rejoices in himſelf, in proportion as he has been ſo happy as to provoke and diſoblige them. Of this I could give ſeveral notable examples, were it not that it muſt certainly offend their modeſty, not only to praiſe them in print, but even to publiſh their higheſt virtues.

But now, upon the whole, as a great critic obſerves, that there is ſometimes more beauty ſhown in a compoſition, by receding from the rules of art, when an important point is to be gained, than by ſtrictly adhering to them; ſo, all theſe rules notwithſtanding, it ſhall be allowable for any moderate man, upon an extraordinary emergency, to break them for a good end: as for inſtance, he may ſpeak even in Whitefield's ſtyle, when his ſettlement has the misfortune to depend upon the people; which I have known done with good ſucceſs. We are alſo well ſatisfied, that Mr. T——r of Norwich, and ſuch like firſt-rate writers, ſhould make pompous collections of Scripture-texts, as their truly laudable intention is, by altering Chriſtianity, to reconcile it to moderation and common ſenſe; and to find out a meaning to words, which the writers of them, as living in the infancy of the church, had not diſcernment enough to intend.

To conclude this maxim, it would be too formal for me, and too tedious to the reader, to enumerate all the objections that are, by some, raised against our way of preaching: I shall therefore mention but one, and show it is false; hoping that the reader will suppose there is no more foundation for any of the rest. It is alledged, there is no method in our discourses, but that they consist in random flights, and general declamations. Nothing more untrue. The polite reader, or hearer, knows that there may be an excellent and regular method, where there are no formal distinctions of firstly, secondly, and thirdly; but, to cut off all occasion of cavil, let the world hereby know, that one of our most famed preachers chose once for his text, John xi. 29. and of that verse the following words, "He stinketh." He observed, we had there (or thereabouts) a description of the threefold state of a bad man: first, he sickened; secondly he died; thirdly, he stank. This I take to have been an accuracy in point of method, to which it will not be easy to find a parallel.

MAXIM V.

A minister must endeavor to acquire as great a degree of politeness, in his carriage and behavior, and to catch as much of the air and manner of a fine gentleman, as possibly he can.

THIS is usually a distinguishing mark between the moderate and the orthodox; and how much we have the advantage in it is extremely obvious. Good manners is undoubtedly the most excellent of all accomplishments, and in some measure supplies the place of them all when they are wanting. And surely nothing can be more necessary to, or more ornamental and becoming in a minister: it gains him easy access into the world, and frees him from that rigid severity which renders many of them so odious and detestable to the polite part of it. In former times, ministers were so monkish and recluse, for ordinary, and so formal when they did happen to appear, that all the jovial part of mankind, particularly rakes and

libertines, shunned and fled from them; or, when unavoidably thrown into their company, were constrained, and had no kind of confidence to repose in them: whereas now, let a moderate, modern, well-bred minister go into promiscuous company, they stand in no manner of awe, and will even swear with all imaginable liberty. This gives the minister an opportunity of understanding their character, and of perhaps sometimes reasoning in an easy and genteel manner against swearing. This, though indeed it seldom reforms them, yet it is as seldom taken amiss; which shows the counsel to have been administered with prudence.

How is it possible that a minister can understand wickedness, unless he either practises it himself (but much of that will not yet pass in the world) or allows the wicked to be bold in his presence? To do otherwise, would be to do in practice what I have known narrow-minded bigotted students do as to speculation, viz. avoid reading their adversaries books because they were erroneous; whereas it is evident no error can be refuted till it be understood.

The setting the different characters of ministers in immediate opposition, will put this matter past all doubt, as the sun of truth rising upon the stars of error, darkens and makes them to disappear. Some there are, who may be easily known to be ministers, by their very dress, their grave demure looks, and their confined precise conversation. How contemptible is this! and how like to some of the meanest employments among us; as sailors, who are known by their rolling walk, and taylors, by the shivering shrug of their shoulders! But our truly accomplished clergy put off so entirely every thing that is peculiar to their profession, that were you to see them in the streets, meet with them at a visit, or spend an evening with them in a tavern, you would not once suspect them for men of that character. Agreeably to this, I remember an excellent thing said by a gentleman, in commendation of a minister, that "he had nothing at all of the clergy-"man about him."

I shall have done with this maxim, when I have given my advice as to the method of attaining to it; which is, That

ſtudents, probationers, and young clergymen, while their bodies and minds are yet flexible, ſhould converſe, and keep company, as much as may be, with officers of the army under five and twenty, of whom there are no ſmall number in the nation, and with young gentlemen of fortune, particularly ſuch as, by the early and happy death of their parents, have come to their eſtates before they arrived at the years of majority. Scarce one of theſe but is a noble pattern to form upon; for they have had the opportunity of following nature, which is the all comprehenſive rule of the ancients, and of acquiring a free manner of thinking, ſpeaking, and acting, without either the pedantry of learning, or the ſtiffneſs contracted by a ſtrict adherence to the maxims of worldly prudence.

After all, I believe I might have ſpared myſelf the trouble of inſerting this maxim, the preſent riſing generation being of themſelves ſufficiently diſpoſed to obſerve it. This I reckon they have, either conſtitutionally, or perhaps have learned it from the inimitable Lord Shaftſbury, who, in ſo lively a manner ſets forth the evil of univerſities, and recommends converſation with the polite Peripatetics, as the only way of arriving at true knowledge.

MAXIM VI.

It is not only unneceſſary for a moderate man to have much learning, but he ought to be filled with a contempt of all kinds of learning but one; which is to underſtand Leibnitz's ſcheme well; the chief parts of which are ſo beautifully painted, and ſo harmoniouſly ſung by Lord Shaftſbury, and which has been ſo well licked into form and method by the late immortal Mr. H———n.

THIS maxim is neceſſary, becauſe without it the former could not be attained to. Much ſtudy is a great enemy to politeneſs in men, juſt as a great care of houſhold affairs ſpoils the free careleſs air of a fine lady: and whether politeneſs is to be ſacrificed to learning, let the impartial world judge. Beſides the ſcheme which I have permitted the moderate man to ſtudy, doth actually ſuperſede the

uſe of all other learning, becauſe it contains a knowledge of the whole, and the good of the whole; more than which, I hope, will be allowed to be not only needleſs, but impoſſible.

This ſcheme excels in brevity; for it may be underſtood in a very ſhort time; which, I ſuppoſe, prompted a certain clergyman to ſay, that any ſtudent might get as much divinity as he would ever have occaſion for in ſix weeks. It is alſo quite agreeable to the improvements that have been made in arts and ſciences of late years; for every thing is now more compendiouſly taught, and more ſuperficially underſtood, than formerly, and yet as well and better to all the purpoſes of life. In the very mechanic arts, laborious diligence gives way to elegance and eaſe; as the lumpiſh, ſtrong, old Gothic buildings, to more genteel, though ſlighter, modern ones. There have been ſchemes publiſhed for teaching children to read by way of diverſion. Every year gives us a ſhorter method of learning ſome branch of knowledge. In ſhort, in theſe laſt days the quinteſſence of every thing has been extracted, and is preſented us, as it were, in little phials; ſo that we may come to all learning by one act of intuition. Agreeably to all this, have we not ſeen in fact, many ſtudents of divinity brought up in hot-beds, who have become ſpeakers in general aſſemblies, and ſtrenuous ſupporters of a falling church, before their beards were grown, to the perfect aſtoniſhment of an obſerving world?

I muſt alſo obſerve, that there is a providential fitneſs of that ſcheme, in another reſpect, for the preſent age and time. When the fees of colleges, and expence of boarding is raiſed; when the rate of living is quite altered, and when a ſpiteful landed intereſt, and a heedleſs parliament, have refuſed to grant any augmentation to our ſtipends; there is no other way remains for us, but to cheapen our education, by taking leſs time to it, and arriving at the point deſigned by a nearer cut. Then there will be no need at all for the critical ſtudy of the Scriptures, for reading large bodies of divinity, for an acquaintance with church-hiſtory, or the writings of thoſe poor crea-

tures the Christian fathers: but all is absorbed into the good of the whole: of which I may say, seriously and soberly, what Dr. Tillotson says ironically of transubstantiation, that it is not only true, but it is all truth, and will not suffer any thing to be true but itself.

We find that moderate men have mostly, by constitution, too much spirit to submit to the drudgery of the kinds of learning above-mentioned, and despise all who do so. There is no controversy now about Arian, Arminian, Pelagian, or Socinian tenets, but only whether this good of-the-whole scheme holds. This shews, by the by, the injustice and malignity of those poor beings the Seceders, who cry out of erroneous doctrines in the church, and assert, that Arminianism is publicly taught by many. It is known, that they mean by the moderate men, when they speak so; and yet I will venture to affirm, that there are not a few young men of that character, who, if they were asked, could not tell what the five Arminian articles are, so little do they regard Arminianism. I myself, the reader will perceive, know the number of them; but whether I know any more about them or not, I shall preserve as a secret in my own mind. It will perhaps be objected against this maxim, That the moderate party commonly set up on a pretence of being more learned than their adversaries; and are, in fact, thought to be very learned in their sermons by the vulgar, who, for that reason hate them. Now, as to their pretending to be more learned than their adversaries, it is most just; for they have, as has been shown, got hold of the sum-total of learning, although they did not calculate it themselves. And as to their being thought learned in their sermons by the vulgar, it is sufficient for that purpose that they be unintelligible. Scattering a few phrases in their sermons, as harmony, order, proportion, taste, sense of beauty, balance of the affections, &c. will easily persuade the people that they are learned: and this persuasion is, to all intents and purposes, the same thing as if it were true. It is one of those deceitful feelings which Mr. H—, in his Essays, has shewn to be so beautiful and useful. These phrases they may easily get in books not above the size of an octa-

vo; and if they incline to be very deep, they may get abundance of citations from the ancient Heathen authors in Cudworth's intellectual System, and mostly translated to their hand.

I shall now subjoin a short catalogue of the most necessary and useful books, the thorough understanding of which will make a truly learned moderate man: Leibnitz's Theodicee, and his letters, Shaftsbury's Characteristics, Collins's Inquiry into Human Liberty, all Mr. H——n's pieces, Christianity as old as the Creation, D—n's Best Scheme, and H—'s Moral Essays*. The two last are Scots authors: and it is with pleasure I can assure my countrymen, they are by far the most perfect of them all, carrying the consequence of the scheme to the most ravishing height. As to poetry, it will be sufficient to read "the Pleasures of the Imagination," and "the Tragedy of Agis," if it be published; because in it dramatic poetry is carried to the summit of perfection: and it is believed, by the author's friends, that there never will be a tragedy published after it, unless by somebody

* It hath been suggested to me, that another author of our own country ought to have been added to the above catalogue; but I judged it improper, for two reasons. One is, that I do not find that author in so high esteem among the moderate, as to deserve a place in so very nice and chosen a collection. But the other, and principal reason is, that the author here intended, professeth himself a sceptic; the meaning of which, if I understand it right, is, either that he does not believe there is any such thing as truth, or that he himself is but seeking after truth, and has not yet found it. Now this is by no means the case with the moderate, who are already in possession of the "ne plus ultra" of human knowledge. For though some of their doctrines are changeable, by reason of the essential difference of persons, things and times; yet, during the period of any doctrine, I have no where known stronger, or severer dogmatists; as appears from their neglect of farther inquiry, and sovereign contempt of all opposers.—In a certain university, about seven years ago (how it is now, I cannot so certainly tell) if a man had spoken honorably of Dr. Samuel Clarke, it cannot be conceived with what derision he was treated by every boy of sixteen, who was wiser than to pay any regard to such a numscul, an enemy to the doctrine of necessity, and wholly ignorant of the moral sense.

that is delirious. But whether the knowledge of this effect, and the compaſſion thence ariſing to future authors, may not, in a perſon of ſo much humility and ſelf-denial, and of ſo conſummate and diſintereſted benevolence, as that theatrical divine, wholly prevent the publication, I cannot tell; and therefore muſt leave it to be brought forth by the midwife Occaſion, from the womb of Time*.

But to give a ſtill higher proof of my deep concern for the improvement and edification of ingenuous youth, I have taken the pains to extract very faithfully the ſum and ſubſtance of the above library, and do here preſent it to the world, under a name which is not without a meaning, though not intelligible to all, viz.

The Athenian Creed.

I believe in the beauty and comely proportions of Dame Nature, and in almighty Fate, her only parent and guardian; for it hath been moſt graciouſly obliged (bleſſed be its name) to make us all very good.

I believe that the univerſe is a huge machine, wound up from everlaſting by neceſſity, and conſiſting of an infinite number of links and chains, each in a progreſſive motion towards the zenith of perfection, and meridian of glory; that I myſelf am a little glorious piece of clockwork, a wheel within a wheel, or rather a pendalum in this grand machine, ſwinging hither and thither by the different impulſes of fate and deſtiny; that my ſoul (if I have any) is an imperceptible bundle of exceeding minute corpuſcles, much ſmaller than the fineſt Holland ſand; and that certain perſons in a very eminent ſtation, are nothing elſe but a huge collection of neceſſary agents, who can do nothing at all.

I believe that there is no ill in the univerſe, nor any ſuch thing as virtue abſolutely conſidered; that thoſe things vulgarly called ſins, are only errors in the judgment, and foils to ſet off the beauty of Nature, or patches to adorn her face; that the whole race of intelligent be-

* Agis, a tragedy, was publiſhed in the year 1758.

ings, even the devils themselves (if there are any) shall finally be happy; so that Judas Iscariot is by this time a glorified saint, and it is good for him that he hath been born.

In fine, I believe in the divinity of L. S——, the saintship of Marcus Antoninus, the perspicuity and sublimity of A——e, and the perpetual duration of Mr. H——n's works, notwithstanding their present tendency to oblivion. Amen.

MAXIM VII.

A moderate man must endeavor, as much as he handsomely can, to put off any appearances of devotion, and avoid all unnecessary exercises of religious worship, whether public or private.

I FULLY intended, upon this part of my subject, to have been at some pains in shewing the great indecency of a grave and apparently serious carriage, or of introducing any religious subject of conversation into promiscuous company: but when I consider how successfully all visible religion was attacked, both by wits and preachers, immediately after the restoration of King Charles II. how constantly any disposition of this sort hath been borne down by all men of taste ever since that time, which is now near a whole century; as also how seldom any religious discourse is to be met with at this day, either among clergy or laity, I shall only rejoice in myself, and congratulate my reader, upon the purity of the times, and proceed to the other part of the maxim.

Now, as to the public exercise of religious worship; although a certain measure of them is reasonable enough, and though the office by which we have our bread, obliges us to be often engaged in them; yet a truly moderate man, without renouncing his calling, has it in his power to pare off a great many superfluities with which the orthodox clergy are apt to overload religion, and render it unpalatable to the polite world.

Being members of church-judicatures, and, we hope

the majority in moſt of them, the moderate party can diſcourage and ſtifle all motions for extraordinary faſts or thankſgivings; which experience has taught us ſerve only to promote idleneſs, and diſcourage induſtry. Upon the day that Henry V. fought at Agincourt, a ſolemn faſt was kept in England for his ſucceſs; and ſome hiſtorians are pleaſed to ſay, that the prayers of the nation had ſome ſhare in procuring the victory; but later hiſtories have diſproved this; and now it can be demonſtrated upon paper, that a faſt day in Scotland loſes 50,000l. to the nation, while no body can make any calculation what it wins. For this reaſon, it was very refreſhing to hear, as we did lately, that even in the moſt diſtant and nothernly corners of this country, there is a ſet of clergy of an heroic ſpirit, who are reſolved to reform their people, and beat them out of that unpolite and barbarous inclination, which many of them ſtill retain, of hearing ſermons.

With a view to the ſame good end, we can curtail our buſineſs at home, both as to the number and length of our pulpit performances. In our own families, though it would not perhaps yet be convenient to imitate the beau monde ſo very quickly, in diſcarding the worſhip of God altogether; yet we may, by degrees, ſometimes omit it, through hurry of buſineſs, at other times be dropping, now and then at leaſt, ſome parts of it; and in gentlemen's families, take care to give diſcreet intimations that we do not incline to put them out of their ordinary way, or occaſion the leaſt interruption to the mirth of the company.

Sometimes indeed it may happen, by a concurrence of circumſtances, that one of us may, at bed-time, be unequally yoked with an orthodox brother, who may propoſe a little unſeaſonable devotion between ourſelves, before we lie down to ſleep; but there are twenty ways of throwing cold water upon ſuch a motion; or, if it ſhould be inſiſted upon, I could recommend a moderate way of complying with it, from the example of one of our friends, who, on a like occaſion, yielded ſo far, that he ſtood up at the back of a chair, and ſaid, "O Lord, we thank thee "for Mr. Bayle's Dictionary. Amen." This was ſo

far from ſpoiling good company, that it contributed wonderfully to promote ſocial mirth, and ſweetened the young men in a moſt agreeable manner for their reſt.——Whatever is forced is unnatural, and ought to be avoided; and therefore, what the Puritan ſaid of ſquare caps, we may apply to many modes of devotion, "That he "would not wear them, becauſe his head was round."

The neceſſity of ſuch a conduct cannot be denied, when it is conſidered what effect the length and frequency of public devotion has had in driving moſt of the faſhionable gentry from our churches altogether; and that even ſuch of them as ſtill vouchſafe their company ſometimes, are yet driven away from the ſacrament of the Lord's ſupper, where the ſervice is expected to be more tedious and tireſome. Now, the only way to regain them to the church, is to accommodate the worſhip, as much as may be, to their taſte: the manner of doing which is ſo well known, that I will not ſpend time in explaining it.

I confeſs there has been ſometimes an ugly objection thrown up againſt this part of my argument, viz. That this deſertion of public worſhip by thoſe in high life, ſeems, in fact, to be contemporary with, and to increaſe, in a pretty exact proportion, to the attempts that have been, and are made to ſuit it to their taſte. It is alledged, that they are led to ſuch a conduct, not by the dictates of their reaſon, but by the depravation of their hearts; and therefore make uſe of the behaviour of the clergy, as an excuſe and juſtification of their conduct. In anſwer to this objection, I ſhall not pretend to ſay what uſe gentlemen may ſometimes make of our conduct, for I have known them often very prepoſterous in their judgment, condemning others for what they freely indulge in themſelves, and no leſs unthankful, rendering evil for good. But ſtill I ſay, there remains no ſtrength in the objection to a man of moderate principles; for it plainly comes much to the ſame thing at laſt, whether the mountain comes to the mouſe, or the mouſe to the mountain. If I ſhould meet a friend halfway, that had got at a diſtance from me, though he ſhould not move a foot, I am ſure we ſhould be nearer one another, than if I had kept my place as well as he.

But whatever be in this, I muſt acknowledge, that to be conſtantly whining and praying, looks ſo extremely orthodox-like, that I cannot help conceiving a prejudice at it, for this very reaſon; and I doubt not but every moderate man, will have the very ſame fellow-feeling. In truth, a great abundance of devotion has ſuch a tendency to inflame one with zeal, that any man who would maintain his moderation, had beſt keep out of the reach of ſuch inſnaring influence. Beſides, it has been an old remark, and I begin to ſuſpect there is ſome ground for it, that let one embrace what ſyſtem of divinity he will, it is impoſſible to pray but according to the orthodox ſyſtem. And whatever laudable pains had been taken, by ſome of our friends, to avoid this inconvenience; yet, from what I have obſerved, in the moſt ſucceſsful of them, I muſt own, I can at preſent ſee no other remedy but to deal as little that way as poſſible.

MAXIM VIII.

In church-ſettlements, which are the principal cauſes that come before miniſters for judgment, the only thing to be regarded is, who the patron and the great and noble heritors are for; the inclinations of the common people are to be utterly deſpiſed.

THAT this maxim is invariably obſerved by all moderate men is certain, and may be atteſted by all that ever were preſent at a General Aſſembly of this national church. The caſe is not now as formerly, when preſentations were held a grievance; for a preſentation is "all in all" to a moderate man: and when there is no preſentation, the greatneſs and nobility of the heritors are upon one ſide. I was witneſs once to a cauſe (which indeed unhappily miſcarried) but there was a noble ſtand made for it by the moderate party, becauſe there was a lord upon the ſide of the minority, although he had no intereſt at all in the pariſh, but a ſmall bit of ground which he had got from a neighbour, in order to run a dike

ſtraight. This appearance greatly rejoiced me, as being a token to what perfection the ſpirit of moderation was arrived.

There are many reaſons upon which this maxim is founded; as the implacable hatred we bear to the elders and common people, and their conſtant wrong judgment, which has been illuſtrated above. As this is ſo very evident, I cannot paſs it without expreſſing my grief and aſtoniſhment, that ſo clear-ſighted an author, and in all reſpects ſo agreeable to our ſentiments, as Lord Shaftſbury, ſhould have ſaid, in his Eſſay on the freedom of Wit and Humor, that, "it belongs to men of flaviſh "principles to affect a ſuperiority over the vulgar, and "to deſpiſe the multitude." This hath made me doubt the truth of an aſſertion of Mr. G. L. one of our own diſciples, "that perfection is attainable in this life;" for, if ever any one attained to perfection, ſurely Lord Shaftſbury was the man. But, to leſſen the difficulty a little, it is probable he had ſomething in his view, quite different from ſettling of kirks, when he wrote in this manner; for had he lived to our times, and been an heritor in Scotland, I can hardly allow myſelf to think, that ever he would have appeared on the ſide of the Chriſtian people; though, without all queſtion, he would have been choſen an elder, and ſent up, "duly atteſted," to the General Aſſembly.

But to return: The natural reſpect we owe to thoſe in great and high ſtations, claims from us the teſtimony of it required in the maxim. There is an original and eſſential difference between gentry and common people, which ought to be particularly kept up here. For this, we have the authority of a certain worthy laird in the country, who always maintained upon his mind a ſenſe of his dignity, not as a man, but as a gentleman. Of this diſpoſition he gave the following laudable inſtance: being a member of the kirk-ſeſſion in his pariſh, the exciſe-officer happened to come before them for fornication: and beſides the eccleſiaſtical cenſure, it was thought proper to apply to the civil magiſtrate to get him fined according to law: but as the law appoints different fines

for men in different ſtations, when ſome propoſed he ſhould be fined at the rate of a gentleman, the worſhipful member above-mentioned, though known to be very zealous againſt vice, ſtrenuouſly oppoſed his having ſo much honor, and gave the following excellent reaſon for it: "Since God Almighty has been pleaſed to make a diſ-"tinction between gentlemen and other men, why ſhould "not we keep up this diſtinction in all caſes?" And ſo he was fined only as a commoner.

Another thing ſtrongly pleads for gentlemen having the chief hand in ſettling kirks, that now-a-days very few of our principal gentry attend ordinances, or receive any benefit by a miniſter after he is ſettled, unleſs perhaps talking of the news at a private viſit, or playing a game at back-gammon: and therefore it is but fair, that in lieu of the edification of the common people, they ſhould have the honor or profit of conferring the benefice. I ſhall only further add, that having no view of attending upon him for ordinary, they muſt be the beſt judges of his preaching gifts, as being moſt diſintereſted: for which reaſon, non-reſiding heritors, inſtead of deſerving to be cut out altogether, as the ſtupid and undiſcerning orthodox would have it, are by much to be preferred to thoſe that reſide.

The reader will eaſily perceive, that I have here given much better reaſons for this conduct than thoſe commonly aſſigned, viz. the law, in the caſe of patrons; and the payment of the ſtipend, in the caſe of heritors. For, as to the firſt of theſe, it is quite from the purpoſe; for the law maintains its own ground as far as it goes, and is irreſiſtible: the only queſtion is, How we ſhall act as to what is left to us to determine? If the law hindered us to determine on any ſide we pleaſed, ſuch cauſes never would be pleaded before us. As to the other, about the heritors paying the ſtipend, it is not juſt; for the whole nation pays it: the heritor gets his lands with that burden upon them at firſt; and when one buys land from another, he never pays for the ſtipend: ſo that really an heritor, is never a penny the poorer of the ſtipend, except that happening commonly to ſee the money firſt, he

may perhaps be ſorry that any body ſhould get it but himſelf. However, though theſe reaſons be not ſufficient at bottom, I deny not but it may be very proper to aſſign them to ſuch as are ignorant enough to yield to them, or who have ſo ſqueamiſh ſtomachs as not to be able to digeſt the ſolid reaſons upon which I have grounded my maxim. It is with the mind as with the body, it muſt be fed with ſuch things as it is able to bear, and as will beſt agree with its frame and conſtitution.

MAXIM IX.

While a ſettlement is carrying on, the candidate againſt whom there is a ſtrong oppoſition from the people, muſt be looked upon, and every where declared to be, a perſon of great worth, and remarkable abilities; provided always, that if ever the ſame perſon, after he is ſettled, be at pains, and ſucceed in gaining the people's affection, he ſhall then fall as much below the ordinary ſtandard in his character, as before he was raiſed above it.

BOTH parts of this maxim will appear very reaſonable to all that ſee with our eyes. The people being againſt a man, is a certain ſign of his being a good preacher, as has been formerly proved: it is alſo a pretty ſure ſign of his being of moderate principles, "which make the comers there-"unto perfect;" and theſe two things are ſufficient to juſtify us in raiſing his character. It is indeed often abſolutely neceſſary, when a proceſs is in agitation, that it may help him out with a ſcanty concurrence, and have an influence upon the church courts, which are compoſed of a mixed multitude. Nor is it eaſy to conceive, how excellent and well invented a weapon this is, the giving a man an extraordinary and high character. It neceſſarily imprints a kind of veneration of him on the minds of his judges; and hath this peculiar advantage, that there is no parrying of it; for whatever ſome few of different principles may think, they dare not plainly contradict it.—Every man has it in his power to ſpeak well of one another,

but nobody muſt take the liberty to ſpeak ill of a man in a public court, unleſs he can alſo venture to give him a libel. Many a time have I heard young men highly extolled in church courts, when their ſettlement was in dependance, who, in ſtrict truth, were but middling kind of men, and ſome of them very heavy, who afterwards proved no ſmall incumbrance upon the moderate body.

As to the other part of the maxim, taking away their character for ability when they apoſtatize to orthodoxy, this will be eaſily accounted for, if it be remembered how they came by it. It was freely given them; and therefore it may be taken away at pleaſure: It was given to bring them in as an additional ſtrength to the moderate intereſt; and therefore, when they forſake that intereſt, it is but juſt to deprive them of it. If any ſhall object, that this is not agreeable to the ſtrict rules of veracity, I deſire it may be remembered, that the preſent faſhionable ſcheme of moral philoſophy is much improved in compariſon of that which prevailed ſome time ago. Virtue does not now conſiſt in "acting agreeably to the nature of things," as Dr. Clarke affirms; nor in "acting according to truth," which an old ſchool-maſter, one Woollaſton, once wrote a book to prove; but in "the good of the whole;" and therefore an illuſtrious and noble end ſanctifies the means of attaining it. Our ſentiments, in this reſpect, are deſcribed by an anonymous poet, who, I believe meant no good to us; however, it points out the character pretty plainly thus:

"To ſecond him roſe ſurly Peter,
"An angry bigot for good-nature:
"That truth ſhould valued be by meaſure,
"And weight, he thought;
"That inch of truth, in courteſy,
"To ſpan of intereſt ſhould give way?
"And pound of gain, for ounce of lie,
"Is cheaply bought."

If it be further objected, That ſtill this only ſatisfies ourſelves, whereas in the caſe in hand it is neceſſary to

satisfy the world. As to this, we can freely say, that the man was good, but now he is bad; and that is no contradiction: for though the Confession of Faith maintains the infallible perseverance of the saints in grace, yet we never affirmed the necessary perseverance of men in moderation, these two things being entirely distinct the one from the other. Some of our friends do fall away now and then: our strength, for ordinary, consists in young men; for there are several who, in old age, through the decay of their faculties, begin to incline a little to orthodoxy, and then we term them, not "old men," but "old wives." However, there are also some, who not only persevere, but gloriously improve in moderation to the latest old age, and to their dying day; of which number was the late Rev. Mr. J. R. in K. whose name I have thought proper to record in this immortal work, that it may be had in everlasting remembrance.

MAXIM X.

WHENEVER we have got a settlement decided over the belly perhaps of the whole people in the parish, by a majority in the General Assembly, the victory should be improved, by appointing some of the orthodox opposers of the settlement to execute it, especially those of them that pretend to have a scruple of conscience at having an active hand in any such settlement.

THEY do not deserve a victory, who know not how to push it, or to improve the advantage they have gained. A sentence of the General Assembly, even as of any other court, signifies nothing, if it be not executed. To rest satisfied with the victory we have gained, by the bare decision, would indeed be yielding it back again, and losing in fact, what we gained in appearance. This is self-evident. But the next point is, Who shall be employed in executing it; those who appointed, or those who pretend a scruple of conscience at doing what appears to their disordered intellects to be what they call sinful?—Now, as to this, allow me only to ask a few plain questions.

Is not every ſociety divided into the governing and the governed, the maſters and the ſervants? What is the ſubject of any debate in the Aſſembly that ends in a vote, but to determine who is the one, and who is the other? when once a vote has made us maſters, does not the ſame vote make the minority ſervants? And do I need to aſk further, if there is any piece of drudgery to be performed, who it belongs to, the maſters or the ſervants? Apply this then to the caſe in hand: Who would hazard his own life in fording a river, if he had a ſervant to try the depth of it before him? Who would chuſe to go to a pulpit under a ſhower of ſtones from an enraged populace, if he had others under his authority, whom he could ſend upon the ſame ungracious errand?

Now, the uſefulneſs of this conduct is very evident: for it is plain, they will either obey or diſobey. If the firſt is the caſe, then we ſhall have the honor of bringing them, and they themſelves the profit and advantage of being brought, into the hatred and abhorrence of the common people; in commendation of which ſtate, enough has been ſaid already. If they diſobey, they muſt be depoſed, and caſt out as incorrigible, to make way for thoſe that are better than themſelves. This will be to the advantage of the church: for young men, "cæteris pari-"bus," are much better than old.

As this method of purging the church of corrupt members is like to be a prevailing meaſure in our days, I ſhall endeavor to ſupport it by a few, but theſe demonſtrative arguments; in moſt of which, indeed, I ſhall have little more than the honor of recording the ſentiments and reaſoning of ſome eminent men that were members of the two laſt General Aſſemblies.

In the firſt place it is certain, that the command of a proper authority is ſufficient to make any action not only innocent and lawful, but perfectly right, and ſtrictly obligatory; inſomuch that if an executioner ſhould be commanded to hang his father or ſon, for praying to God, or reading his Bible; nay, if one of Jeſus Chriſt's diſciples had happened to have been a Roman ſoldier, and ſhould have been commanded to crucify his maſter, he ſhould

have betrayed the most egregious ignorance of the Christian religion, had he made the least difficulty in executing such orders.

It is to no purpose here to object the immutability of moral laws, and the supreme authority of God: for if obedience to human authority be one of his laws, as it plainly is, then all his other laws must be submitted to such alterations and suspensions as our superiors think proper. The apostles do indeed sometimes speak of "obeying God rather than man;" but we can explain this as easily as we do another text, in the third chapter of the Romans, which seems to teach, that "we should not do "evil that good may come:" for as, in the one case, whatever promotes good cannot be evil; so, in the other, if human authority be once duly interposed, it is obeying God to comply with whatever is injoined thereby; and therefore it is impossible that ever there can an interference happen. Besides, some allowance must, no doubt, be made for the difference of times, and disadvantages which all the ancient writers lay under, the late fine improvements in the science of morals not having then been excogitated. But I can assure the reader, the principle which I have laid down, is now the doctrine of this church, wherein both divines and lawyers who are members of our Assemblies, are entirely agreed, and will not suffer any body to call it in question. And what an obvious beauty has moral virtue gained from the delicate and skilful hands that have lately been employed in dressing her ladyship! She was once stiff and rigid, like ice or cold iron; now she is yielding as water, and, like iron hot from the furnace, can easily be beaten into what shape you please. And here I must say, I think it some pity that so fine a genius as Grotius did not flourish somewhat later, or that the moral sense was not started a little earlier, and so that great man preserved from falling into so great a blunder as the maintaining, that "even military "authority may be resisted; and that a case may be given, "when a soldier ought to disobey orders:" for now it is a settled point, that even ecclesiastical authority (which, if there were any difference, I allow ought rather to be

the milder of the two) is sufficient to bear down before it what were once called the "eternal," no less, and "immutable laws of morality;" and, by divine authority, "is paramount to divine authority itself."

I shall only observe two very plain and clear advantages in this principle, whereby it will appear, how happy it is that the church hath fallen so entirely in with it, and proceeds so uniformly upon it.

The first is, that in case of necessity, an action which no body would chuse perhaps to take the weight of upon them, may yet be done without the least hazard of any body's being called to account for it in the other world. If the doer of an action were to be the judge of its lawfulness, he might be damned perhaps for doing it, in case it were found to be wrong; but upon this principle of implicit obedience to his superiors, there is no repelling his defence: it was not his province to judge whether it was lawful or unlawful; and the Assembly or Commission who gave the order, being bodies politic, are, by that time, all dissolved, and appear only in the capacity of individuals.

The other advantage is this, that if the supreme court of any kind, were allowed to be the only proper judge of the lawfulness of its own appointments, it would be impossible, in the nature of things, that ever there could be a separation in the church, or a rebellion in the state. The justness of this consequence is so evident, that I shall not spend any time in illustrating it, but heartily wish the principle from which it flows, were universally embraced.

In the second place, the disobedient brethren have but one pretence for their conduct, which is groundless, viz. a "scruple of conscience:" as to which, hear Dr. Goodman, a noble English writer: "A tender conscience is "nothing else but an ignorant and uninstructed mind; "or a sickly, melancholy, and superstitious understanding." I could easily show, that there is no such thing as a real scruple of conscience: the lawyers in the General Assembly, who are men of as great penetration as any in the land, have most of them plainly declared, that they do not conceive it possible. A certain learned gentleman

of this court hath assured us, that taking away ministers stipends would enlighten their conscience. The renowned author of Hudibras is known to be of the same opinion: from which two authorities I will endeavor to amend Dr. Goodman's definition: for a "tender conscience is "not an ignorant mind," but a "full stomach." This accounts for appearances better, and particularly for the epithet of tender, commonly given to it, as all physicians are agreed, that a wound upon a full stomach is very dangerous. Having thus rooted up the very foundation of this pretence, it is needless to go through the several particulars insisted upon by the disobedient as straitening to them: and therefore I shall but in a word mention one of them. They pretend it is a profane farce to confer, in a solemn manner, the care of the souls of a certain people, when nothing is really conferred but a legal title to a benefice: as also, that the candidate cannot conscientiously answer several of the questions commonly put on those occasions. But is it not extremely strange, that any body can be so dull as not to regard these questions in their only true and proper light, as a necessary piece of formality, without which a charge of horning for the stipends could not be raised? And as to the other part of the objection, whether it be not much more a mock ceremony, to ordain a man to a congregation, when a title to the benefice cannot be conferred, I shall leave the reader to determine, as if the case were his own.

The third principle upon which our conduct is founded, is of such undoubted verity, that the bare mentioning of it is sufficient to convince all the world how little it stands in need of any proof; accordingly no moderate man views it in any other light than as an axiom, or self-evident truth; namely, That if any excuse for disobedience were once admitted, or any indulgence granted to these tender-conscienced inferiors, there would be an end of all government in an instant; neither commands nor obedience could proceed one step further, but every individual instrument of power, in that fatal society, astonished at the monstrous phænomenon, would stare at one another; all the wheels of the political ma-

chine would ſtop at once; nay, would ſplit into ten thouſand pieces; every relation and connexion of their parts would be inſtantly diſſolved, and the beautiful whole would ruſh into a wild chaos of anarchy and confuſion. The reader will eaſily believe, I am too wiſe to offer a proof of an axiom or ſelf-evident truth*; however, I think it but fair to inform him, that ſuch is the nature of paper and ink, that they have not the power of doing it all the juſtice even in narration, of which it is capable elſewhere. Whoever has heard the demonſtrative tone, or beheld the infallible air, and geſture of certainty, with which it has been aſſerted by an Aſſembly-orator, would be aſhamed that he ever ſtood in need to be put in mind of it: for my own part, I am ſo entirely influenced by it, that if the moſt faithful, diligent, and uſeful ſervant ſhould, in the humbleſt manner repreſent to me, that he had a ſcruple about executing any of my orders, and beg to be excuſed, ſuppoſe from ſhaving me on Sunday morning, and I ſhould unfortunately be ſo far off my guard, as for once to indulge him, I would immediately diſſolve my whole family, and never more think of lodging with a living ſoul under the ſame unhappy roof.

Againſt this principle, however, ſome have preſumed to object particular inſtances in Scripture-hiſtory, of ſuch excuſes being actually admitted, without any apparent diſſolution of the conſtitution: ſuch as Gideon's paſſing from his order to his ſon to kill the two princes of Midian, and ſlaying them himſelf; and that of Saul, who when his guards refuſed to fall upon the prieſts, committed that affair to another, without any farther noiſe. Now, not to mention the difficulty of arguing from facts

* I deſire that this general aſſertion may not be miſunderſtood, as if I intended a reflection upon ſome late diſcoveries in moral philoſophy; for though an axiom, or ſelf-evident truth, cannot be proved; yet a great genius, who can do any thing, may take a view of theſe ſame axioms, dignify and adorn them, by writing an eſſay round about each of them, and prove that they ought to be called Feelings. This is greatly to the advantage of the commonwealth of learning, as experience hath ſhewn.

of an ancient date, cited only by one author, and that very curtly, I humbly conceive these instances produced, make directly against the objection; for it appears to me very evident, that the kingdom was taken from Saul, and given to David, for this very reason, he being unfit to govern, by thus allowing his authority to be trampled upon. Nor will it be easy to assign any different reason, why none of the posterity of Gideon were ever permitted to rule Israel. There are some later instances of that sort, nearer home, thrown up by shallow politicians; as that of the hangman at Ayr, who refused to execute the Whigs in King Charles the IId's time; and that which happened a few years ago among ourselves, when the civil government overlooked the disobedience of a set of refractory clergymen who refused to read the act of parliament against the murderers of Captain Porteous. In the first of these cases, the judges acted in a laudable manner; for they deprived the man of his benefice: and for the crime of his disobedience, I am persuaded he died childless, for I have never heard of any of his posterity in that part of the country. In the other case, I confess the government was much to be blamed; and have long been of opinion, that their detestable lenity, at that time, was the cause of the late rebellion, which followed so soon after it. It is to be hoped they will take warning for the time to come; for I am persuaded, one other instance of the same kind would effectually set the Pretender upon the throne of Britain.

The last principle which I shall mention, and which, with the rest, I am sure is abundantly sufficient to support the maxim laid down for our conduct, is, That the best method of conviction, and of all others the most proper for a church-court, is that of authority, supported in its highest rigor by censures, which may be felt by men of the dullest capacities, as deposition, and suspension from benefice as well as office. If the goodness of an argument, or the excellency of a method, is to be measured by the frequency of recourse that is had to it, I think none can dispute precedency with this. It must be allowed to be, of all others, the most Christian method; it

reigned over the whole church without a rival, for many ages; and though proteſtants, for a while pretended to find fault with it in the hands of their enemies; yet, which of them all, when they became able to make uſe of it, have not tried it in their turn? And whether we conſider the majority, by whoſe hands this weapon is to be wielded, or the minority upon whom the weight of it muſt fall, it will plainly appear to be admirably ſuited to the preſent times. As to the beaſts of burden, who fall to be driven by this method, they are known to be ſuch dull and lifeleſs animals (as they are moſt of them paſt the vigor of youth) that no other argument can make any impreſſion upon them. However a horſe might be managed, who is a generous creature, no body could think of another method to make an aſs move, but conſtantly to belabour its ſides. There cannot be a clearer evidence of the dulneſs and ſtupidity of theſe obſtinate beings we have to do with, than the expence of rhetoric that has been thrown away upon them, to perſuade them of a thing as clear as the ſun, viz. that if they had any conſcience they would depoſe themſelves, and yield their place to more pliable ſucceſſors. They even pretend conſcience here again; and tell us they are placed in a ſtation which they dare not deſert, unleſs they be thruſt out of it. Now, let the reader judge how incapable of perſuaſion one muſt be, to find difficulty in ſo plain a caſe; and therefore how neceſſary it is, that a more effectual method ſhould be tried.

On the other hand, the majority in Aſſemblies and Commiſſions ſeems, at preſent, to be peculiarly adapted to ſuch a method of conviction as I have mentioned. One part of our ſtrength lies in the laity who attend our judicatures; theſe, as they poſſeſs no benefice in the church, they are out of the reach of this ſort of cenſure, and therefore are only capable of inflicting, but not of ſuffering it; and as they are not much accuſtomed to ſolving caſes of conſcience, what other method can occur to them, when things of this nature are thrown in their way, than the more gentleman-like method, for which Alexander the Great is ſo juſtly celebrated, viz. cutting

the troublesome knot, which they would find tedious and difficult to untie? The rest of our side consists in clergy of the youngest sort; who, as they are imitators of the manners of gentlemen, may be supposed to act with the same spirit in public judgment. Though they can give flourishes of rhetoric enough; nay, though of one of them in particular, I may literally say,

> ———He cannot ope
> His mouth, but out there flies a trope;

yet as for logic, it is well known this part of education is fallen into great contempt; and it is not to be expected, that such brisk and lively spirits, who have always hated every thing that looked scholastic-like, can bear to be tied down to the strict methods of argumentation. But though we were greater masters in this method of conviction, yet our blood may be easily supposed too warm for any thing that is so slow, and at best so uncertain in its success. No; we are now the majority, and our power as a late acquisition, is the more agreeable for being new; we must taste the sweets of authority, which can only be by compelling our inferiors to obey us. If our sentences are executed, it is the same thing to the new incumbent, the same thing to the church in general, and the same thing to us, whether the executors are willing or unwilling; for, as to that whole matter of conscience, about which so much noise is made, I have already related our sentiments; from whence it is evident, that such nonsense, as laying a violent temptation in men's way to act against the light of their own mind, is nothing but words without a meaning. And as to the expression of the apostle Paul, about church-power, which he uses over and over again, that it is "for "edification, and not for destruction;" it is no secret, that there is a various reading; and if once we had, "for de-"struction and not for edification," established as the true reading, which, if we were dealers in criticism, might perhaps be easily done, we should not only get rid of this troublesome text, but make an acquisition of it on our side of the question, to the confusion of our greatest enemies.

MAXIM XI.

The character which moderate men give their adversaries, of the orthodox party, must always be that of "knaves" or "fools;" and, as occasion serves, the same person (if it will pass) may be represented as a "knave" at one time, and as a "fool" at another.

THE justness of this proceeding may be easily made appear. The principles of moderation being so very evident to reason, it is a demonstration, that none but unreasonable men can resist their influence: and therefore we cannot suppose, that such as are against us can be so from conscience. Besides, setting aside the superior intrinsic excellence of the one set of principles above the other, there are much stronger carnal motives, to speak in their own style, to act in their way, than in ours; and therefore there is great ground to conclude, that they act from hypocrisy, but not so of us. They please the people; we please, at least endeavor to please, those of high rank. Now there are many remarkable advantages they gain by pleasing the people; whereas it is evident, "ex post facto," that we gain nothing by pleasing the gentry; for they never trampled upon us so much as of late; and have entirely defeated our application to parliament for augmentation of stipend. So far are we from being in any respect the better of the gentry, that we have really great reason to complain of them; for when we have endeavored to ingratiate ourselves with them, by softness and complaisance, and by going considerable lengths with them in their freedom, they oftentimes most ungenerously despise us but the more: nay, many of them have first taught us to live at a high rate, and then refuse to give us any thing to keep it up. Now, as we men of reason could not but foresee this, it is plain nothing but the most disinterested virtue could lead us to act as we have done. Whereas, on the other hand, the orthodox have gained, and do possess the esteem of the common people; and so, it is plain they could have no other view in their conduct but to attain it. However, to shew our

charity, we allow there are ſome on their ſide who are indifferently honeſt; but theſe are men of very weak intellectuals, as is evident from their not thinking as we do.

The other part of the maxim is abundantly reaſonable, but not ſo eaſily put in practice, viz. repreſenting the ſame individual perſon ſometimes as a knave, and ſometimes as a fool. This affair is ſometimes unluckily managed, when it is incautiouſly attempted. In order to its being done ſucceſsfully, therefore let the following rules be obſerved.

1ſt. Let a man be repreſented as a knave and a hypocrite to one ſort of people in the world; and let him be repreſented as a fool, not to the ſame, but to another ſort: let the firſt be chiefly your better ſort of people, particularly thoſe among them that hate much profeſſion of religion, and are apt to call all ſtrictneſs hypocriſy: the other it is plain, muſt be the ſimple and credulous.

The ſecond rule is, that, if poſſible, there ſhould be different perſons employed in ſpreading theſe different calumnies of the ſame man. By this apparent conſiſtency in every one's opinion with itſelf, they will be the more eaſily maintained, and be the leſs liable to diſcovery: and thus, as the ſeveral wheels of a watch, by oppoſite motions, promote the ſame end; ſo the ſeveral members of the moderate body, by ſeemingly different and oppoſite means, conſpire in promoting the good of the whole. The principle upon which theſe two rules are founded, is, That probability ought to be ſtudied in every falſhood we would have believed; which principle is laid down, and finely illuſtrated, in the Art of Political Lying, ſaid to be wrote by one Dr. Arbuthnot.

It will not, I hope, be reckoned wandering from my ſubject, when I obſerve, that the very ſame principle of ſtudying probability is to be applied to the celebration of the characters of our friends, as well as the defamation of our enemies. Theſe two deſigns indeed have a very ſtrong connexion, and do mutually ſupport and promote one another. Praiſing one character is, by neceſſary and manifeſt conſequence, a defamation of its oppoſite; and,

in ſome caſes, which may eaſily be conceived, it is the moſt eligible, and the moſt effectual way of doing it. I have been preſent at a converſation, where the chief intention of one of the ſpeakers, and what he had moſt at heart, was to ruin the character and reputation of a certain perſon who happened to be mentioned, with his hearers; but he could not well know, whether they were able to bear a large quantity of unmixed reproach, he choſe the wiſer and ſafer method, of celebrating another character, and drawing it with all his art, in ſuch a manner, as the ſtrongeſt oppoſition poſſible might appear, in ſome of its circumſtances, to that of the perſon intended to be wounded by reflection.

But in this, as in the former caſe, great judgment and prudence muſt be uſed; nothing muſt be ſaid, the contrary of which is, or may be eaſily known to be true; and particularly all the antiquated orthodox phraſes, in giving a miniſter's character, are to be religiouſly avoided. The neceſſity of this direction will beſt appear from an example: Suppoſe I ſhould ſay of Momus, he was a youth of early, and continues to be a man of eminent piety, walking with God, and ſpending many hours every day in ſecret devotion; has a deep and ſtrong ſenſe upon his mind, of the worth and value of time, and lays it out wholly in fitting others and himſelf for eternity; has ſo ſacred a regard for truth, that he never tells a lie, even in jeſt; has a moſt humble deportment, and is perfectly free from that prevailing fault of triumphing over the weak or ſhame-faced by raillery or impudence; has been frequently heard to expreſs his diſpleaſure at all lenity of carriage, and frothy unprofitable diſcourſe, in perſons of the ſacred characters; and as he was always himſelf remarkable for a purity of converſation, ſo he cannot allow the moſt diſtant alluſion to obſcenity to paſs without a reproof; in ſhort, his whole behavior commands both the reverence and love of all who have the happineſs of his acquaintance. I ſay, if I ſhould draw the character of Momus in this manner, as ſome authors do thoſe of the Puritan clergy about a hundred years ago, it is probable he would give me no thanks: and indeed,

he would owe me none; for it would have much more the air of a satire than of a panegyric.

It is, however, possible to draw a character of the same person, which shall have some truth, and much probability in it; and which, as being the character of a modern, shall be much more in the modern commendatory style. He is a man of a most sprightly and lively fancy, of an inexhaustible fund of wit and humour, where he pleases to display it, though the iniquity of the times has, in some measure, checked its indulgence. He is, notwithstanding the grimness of his countenance, entirely free from any sourness or moroseness of temper, so that in his conversation a man may enjoy all manner of ease and freedom. He is a most genteel and elegant preacher and poet; and, to my knowledge, a man of a warm and good heart.*

MAXIM XII.

As to the world in general, a moderate man is to have great charity for Atheists and Deists in principle, and for persons that are loose and vicious in their practice; but none at all for those that have a high profession of religion, and a great pretence to strictness in their walk and conversation.

THIS maxim seems to be pretty strongly laid; and yet, upon a strict inquiry, it will be found that we follow it very exactly. That we have charity for the first-mentioned sort of persons, is evident; for we endeavor to accommodate ourselves to them, and draw as near them as possibly we can, insisting upon nothing in our sermons but what may be said to be a part, or an improvement, of the law of nature. And as to our having no charity for the other sort, it is as evident; witness the odious idea we have affixed to the name of a professor (unless when it

* This expression, "a man of a good heart," is much in fashion among the moderate, and of great significancy and beauty; but it is only to be used in speaking to persons of some degree of taste; for I knew a particular instance in which it disobliged the person it was intended to gain.

is meant of a profeſſor in a college ;) and witneſs our ironical way of ſpeaking, when we ſay of a man, he has a "grave ſanctified air." Nay, even holineſs and godlineſs are ſeldom taken by us in a very good ſenſe : when we ſay, "One of the holy brethren," or, "A good godly "lady," they would miſtake us very much that would think we had a high opinion of any of theſe perſons.

This our conduct a certain young man of the orthodox-ſide, reflected very ſeverely upon, as he thought, in a ſermon, which he afterwards printed, in words to this purpoſe : "They can indeed talk very fluently of uni-"verſal benevolence, and a charitable candid diſpoſition— "but their charity is confined to thoſe who favor their "opinions, or perhaps are indifferent about religion alto-"gether ; while the leaſt appearance of ſerious devotion, "or fervent zeal for God, is enough to forfeit it. Indeed "this charity is as myſterious as the faith of the moſt bi-"gotted Catholic ; it is equally full of contradictions ; "and ſeems reſolved to found itſelf, not upon evidence, "but upon the want of it. Where every thing has the "worſt appearance, there they will believe well ; but "where the outward conduct is blameleſs, they candidly "ſuſpect that nothing but hypocriſy lies at the bottom." But, with the leave of this ſmart youth, what he ſays of us is very true, and we maintain it to be right : for the very meaning of charity is to believe without evidence ; it is no charity at all to believe good of a man when we ſee it, but when we do not ſee it. It is with charity in ſentiment, as with charity in ſupplying the wants of the neceſſitous ; we do not give alms to the rich but to the poor. In like manner, when there are all outward appearances of goodneſs, it requires no charity to believe well of the perſons : but when there are none at all, or perhaps very many to the contrary, then I will maintain it is charity, and charity in its perfection, to believe well of them. Some object to this, Well, ſince it is your will, have charity for them ; but have charity alſo for ſuch as are apparently good. Oh ! the ſtupid world ! and ſlow of heart to conceive ! is it not evident to a demonſtration, that if the appearance of wickedneſs be the foundation of

charity, the appearance of goodneſs, which is its oppoſite, muſt be the foundation of a quite contrary judgment, viz. ſuſpecting, or rather believing ill of them? If any ſtill inſiſt, That if not charity, yet juſtice ſhould incline us to believe well of them? as I have ſeemingly confeſſed; I anſwer, That we have no occaſion for juſtice, if we have charity; for charity is more than juſtice, even as the whole is more than a part: but though I have ſuppoſed, "argumentandi gratia," that juſtice requires this, yet it is not my ſentiment; for the perſon meant being uſually great enemies to us, are thereby cut off from any claim in juſtice to our good opinion; and being alſo, as has been proved, improper objects of charity, it remains that we ſhould hate them with perfect hatred, as in fact we do.

MAXIM XIII.

ALL moderate men are joined together in the ſtricteſt bond of union, and do never fail to ſupport and defend one another to the utmoſt, be the cauſe they are engaged in what it will.

THIS maxim I do not inſert ſo much for the inſtruction of the ignorant, as for the perfection of my own plan, and the honor of the whole body; for I have hardly ever known it fail in any inſtance whatever. And as this character belongs, without controverſy, to all the moderate, ſo it belongs to them by an excluſive privilege; for they do moſt loudly complain of, and load with moſt opprobrious epithets, any of the orthodox, who attempt to imitate them in it, as has been ſometimes known. Nothing indeed can be more juſt and reaſonable than theſe complaints; for ſuch conduct in the orthodox is a plain deſertion of their own principles, a robbery and invaſion of the property of others. Conſcience, upon which they pretend to act, is, of all things, the moſt ſtiff and inflexible; and cannot by any art, be moulded into another ſhape, than that which it naturally bears: whereas the whole principles of moderation are moſt gentle and ductile, and may be applied to almoſt all purpoſes imaginable.

If any, through an envious infidelity, entertain a doubt of the truth asserted in the maxim, they are referred, for satisfaction, to the history of the proceedings of this church for these twenty years past, which I take to have been the true reforming period; and are hereby defied to produce an instance in which any moderate man, wise or unwise, old or young, grave or sprightly, failed to concur in supporting one of his own side, whatever was his cause, active or passive, a project for advancement, or the danger of a prosecution. Let but one of us start a scheme, in which he may find his account, or become candidate for an office, the whole, upon the first impulse, as the concordant strings of a musical instrument answer to the touch, return and reverberate the sound. If Momus unwarily makes a sally into the territories of "good-humoured "vice," and is unhappily betrayed by those who ought not to have been trusted; how powerfully is he upheld by the gravest of the party, and the uncharitable malevolent enemy stung and destroyed, like the bear in the fable, for disturbing the hive of industrious bees? Nay, as a yet stronger instance, (being more against nature) I could shew, in the records of a certain presbytery, declarations signed by the most moderate hands, and yet containing as high and ranting expressions in favor of the rights of the Christian people, as ever were used by the most orthodox writer; because, by a wonderful concurrence of circumstances, they served, at that time, to promote the settlement of a moderate man.

Every eye must immediately perceive the beauty and excellence of this part of our character. What more amiable than union? or what more necessary to the support of any society? and what more hateful and horrid than discord and division? Is it not also, by this very means, that we have obtained the victory, and do still preserve our superiority over the orthodox party? They are wholly ignorant of the laws of society, as they have been lately well explained by some of our brethren in print; and know not that all who enter into it, give up their rights as individuals, and are bound "to follow what they "disapprove;" to see with the eyes, and act for the interest of the whole body.

It must be no small commendation of such conduct, that in so doing we either follow, or are followed, by the most eminent and illustrious characters in this nation. It is probable there may be several controverted elections tried before the parliament in a short time; and I dare say, any wise man will foretel their issue in each case, much more certainly from the character of the person, than from the merits of the cause. And it is with some pleasure I observe, that whoever began this practice first, we have carried it to the greatest perfection: for amongst us, the characters of men have been openly pleaded in defence of their cause, which, if I am not mistaken, hath hardly ever been done in any civil court.

How admirably does this principle fall in with the scheme of philosophy upon which the present generation is formed! It illustrates the truth of Mr. H——n's doctrine, That virtue is founded upon instinct and affection, and not upon reason: that benevolence is its source, support, and perfection; and that all the particular rules of conduct are to be suspended, when they seem to interfere with the general good. In short, it shews that the moderate are a transcript in miniature, and do most distinctly exhibit the order, proportion, and unity of design in the universal system.

Time would fail me, if I should go through all the excellencies of this crowning maxim; and therefore I shall only further observe, that it excels all the known principles of action for clearness and perspicuity. In order to determine which side to chuse in a disputed question, it requires no long discussions of reason, no critical inquiry into the truth of controverted facts, but only some knowledge of the characters of men; a study much more agreeable, as well as more common, than that of books. To speak more properly, it requires no study at all of any kind; for, as to the gross, or general tendency of a character, common fame communicates the impression, and seldom or never deceives us. This is probably the reason that the maxim, as has been observed at the beginning of the illustration, is constantly and unerringly followed by the moderate of every age and condition: on which

account I give it as my opinion, that it be added to the number of the feelings, which are at preſent ſo much upon the growing hand.

Thus I have laid down and illuſtrated theſe excellent maxims, not without labour and expence of thought; and I think, carried them ſo far as to make a complete ſyſtem for the education and accompliſhment of a moderate clergyman, for his guidance in public judgment, and his direction as to private practice. And now, courteous reader, as a traveller, after having gone through the different parts of a country, aſcends ſome eminence to review the whole, let us ſtand ſtill and rejoice over the happy ſtate of our mother-church of Scotland, in which moderation ſo greatly prevails; and let us rejoice in hope of what improvements ſhe may yet arrive at, by adhering to theſe maxims, now digeſted into ſuch admirable form and order. O what noble, ſublime, and impenetrable ſermons ſhall now be preached! What victories and triumphs ſhall be obtained over the ſtupid populace, by forced ſettlements, which never have ſuch a beautiful and orderly form, as when finiſhed by ſoldiers, marching in comely array, with ſhining arms: a perfect image of the church-militant! And what perfectly virtuous and ſinleſs lives ſhall be led by theſe clergy, who with ſteady eye, regard the good of this vaſt whole, which never yet went wrong! There is nothing indeed that any way tarniſhes the beauty of this proſpect, but the miſcarriage of the augmentation-ſcheme; over which I could now lament in elegiac ſtrains, but that my hope is not yet quite extinct; for who can tell whether, when we ſhall have brought moderation to perfection, when we ſhall have driven away the whole common people to the Seceders, who alone are fit for them, and captivated the hearts of the gentry to a love of our ſolitary temples, they may not be pleaſed to allow us more ſtipens, becauſe we ſhall have nothing to do but to ſpend them?

I would now propoſe, that the next enſuing General Aſſembly would appoint (what indeed I might not without ſome reaſon expect, whether they appoint it or not) that all the profeſſors of divinity in the nation ſhall lec-

ture one day every week upon this syſtem of moderation, that our youth may be trained up from their infancy in a taſte for it. This, I am ſure, will be much more profitable than any of the antiquated ſyſtems of divinity, as Pictet or Turretine; nay, I am perſuaded, it is more exactly calculated for the preſent times, than even the more modern authors, Epictetus and Marcus Antoninus, which laſt, in Mr. Foulis's tranſlation hath, by many young divines, in their firſt year, been miſtaken for Markii Medulla Theologiæ.

If this my treatiſe ſhall meet with the ſucceſs and acceptance that it juſtly deſerves, it is my intention to offer to the public a ſtill more minute and particular delineation of the moderate character, either in another book of a different form from this, or perhaps in a ſecond edition of the ſame; which ſhall in that caſe, be the text, and to which I will add large explanatory notes, containing much private hiſtory, and referring to many particular facts, in order to render it the more grateful, as well as the more inſtructing to the reader. I have alſo by me the "ſtamina vitæ" of many uſeful and edifying treatiſes, which ſhall be produced in due time, as the muſes ſhall give aſſiſtance; ſuch as, The art of making a flouriſhed ſermon with very little matter, by a proper mixture of ſimilies, and by repeating every paragraph over again in the form of a ſoliloquy: One reſolution of all caſes of conſcience, from the good of the whole ſcheme: A directory for prayer, upon the ſame ſcheme: The horrid ſin and danger of miniſters ſpending too much time in catechiſing and viſiting in country-pariſhes; I do not make any mention of towns, to avoid giving offence; as alſo, leſt it ſhould prove true what I have heard, that the practice is ſcarcely known in any of our great towns, in which caſe, my reaſonings would look like beating the air. Theſe, with many others, I am with aſſiduous care purchaſing materials for completing, by obſervation and converſation, that our church may go on in a progreſſive motion toward the zenith of perfection and meridian of glory.

I ſhall now ſhut up this work, by acquainting the reader with a ſecret, which perhaps he would not otherwiſe advert to, viz. that I enjoy the pleaſure of having done a thing ſeemingly quite impracticable. I have given the moderate, and thoſe who deſire to be inſtructed in that ſcience, a complete view of the maxims and principles of moderation, without, at the ſame time, proſtituting or giving them up to the poſſeſſion of every common reader. Perhaps ſome will aſk, how I imagine I have effected this? I anſwer, that I have ſo framed the whole of my book, that it is really intelligible only to perſons duly qualified; and to every ſuch perſon it is tranſparent as the ſpring-water. I have given only moderate reaſons for moderate principles, ſo that however ſtrongly they may convince ſome, viz. thoſe of our kidney, others they will be ſo far from convincing, that they will be thought to operate a quite contrary way. I have managed this ſo carefully, that I could venture to lay a wager of all that I am worth, that this treatiſe ſhall be taken, by very many, to be the work of an orthodox pen, and to be intended as a banter upon moderate men and their way. They will be tempted to laugh at us, whom they will imagine to be expoſed by this revelation of our myſteries: but how ingeniouſly are they deceived? For, by that very means, every properly prejudiced mind is furniſhed with a complete ſyſtem, upon which to form his ſentiments, and regulate his conduct.

A SERIOUS

APOLOGY

FOR THE

ECCLESIASTICAL CHARACTERISTICS.

By the real AUTHOR of that Performance.

TO THE

NOBILITY AND GENTRY

OF

SCOTLAND,

PARTICULARLY

Such of them as are ELDERS *of the* CHURCH, *and frequently Members of the* GENERAL ASSEMBLY.

Right Honorable, and Right Worſhipful,

THERE was prefixed to the Eccleſiaſtical Characteriſtics a ludicrous dedication; there ſeems therefore ſome propriety in prefixing a ſerious dedication to this Apology. To whom it ought to be addreſſed, could ſcarce admit of a moment's heſitation. It profeſſes to aim at promoting the intereſt of religion in the Church of Scotland; and certainly none have it ſo much in their power to preſerve or improve the conſtitution, both in church and ſtate, as your Lordſhips and Worſhips.

I am not to flatter you with an entire approbation of your paſt conduct as church-members. The deſign of this addreſs is rather to beſeech you, in the moſt reſpectful manner, ſeriouſly to conſider, whether you ought any longer to give countenance to the meaſures which have for ſome time generally prevailed. I am encouraged to this, by reflecting, that it is to you, indeed, we are obliged for ſetting ſome bounds to the attempts of the high-flying clergy. I could give ſeveral inſtances of this; but ſhall only mention one, becauſe it is very recent. In the Aſſembly 1762, it was evidently owing to the honorable members, that a ſanction was not given to a reſolution, of inflicting cenſures upon miniſters, merely for preaching to their own people at their deſire: a thing ſo odious in its ap-

pearance, and ſo dangerous as an example, that no circumſtances or ends to be ſerved by it, could poſſibly juſtify it.

I have already hinted, that you are moſt "able" to promote ſalutary meaſures in the church-courts; give me leave to add, that I firmly believe you will be firſt "willing" to make any change for the better. Individuals may, but, in the preſent ſtate of human nature, it ought not to be expected, that the majority of any body of men will give up private benefit in wealth, power, or eaſe, for public good. Therefore, when once the clergy are corrupted, their reformation can be looked for from the laity only, and not from themſelves. There is an obſervation to this purpoſe in the Rev. Dr. Robertſon's hiſtory,* which deſerves to be written in letters of gold: "They" (i. e. the Proteſtants) "applied to another aſſembly, to a convocation of the Popiſh clergy; but with the ſame ill ſucceſs which hath always attended every propoſal for reformation addreſſed to that order of men. To abandon uſurped power, to renounce lucrative error, is a ſacrifice, which the virtue of individuals has, on ſome occaſions, offered to truth; but from any ſociety of men, no ſuch effort can be expected. The corruptions of a ſociety, recommended by common utility, and juſtified by univerſal practice, are viewed by its members without ſhame or horror; and reformation never proceeds from themſelves, but is always forced upon them by ſome foreign hand." I am ſo much of that eminent writer's opinion, that I look upon every attempt for reviving the intereſt of religion as quite hopeleſs, unleſs you be pleaſed to ſupport it; and, at the ſame time, am not without the ſtrongeſt expectation, that the period is faſt approaching, when you will ſee it neceſſary to interpoſe.

Will you indulge me in adding a fanciful reaſon for my hope. Many of you have been bred to the ſtudy of the law. Now, I have obſerved in reading the New Teſtament, that it was a lawyer who took care of the body of our Saviour, after it had been crucified at the inſtigation of the prieſts. His name was Joſeph of Arimathea, "an honorable man, and a counſellor," and the fact is re-

* Vol. I. p. 143.

corded by all the four evangeliſts. Who knows therefore but the gentlemen of the ſame profeſſion among us may be the inſtruments of delivering the church, which is Chriſt's myſtical body, from the tyrannical impoſitions of churchmen in power?

Look into the hiſtory of this and every other church, and you will ſee, that the laity never lent their influence to promote the ambition and ſecular greatneſs of eccleſiaſtics, but they received their reward in ingratitude and contempt. I have heard many of you praiſed as great friends to the church. By this is meant, that you have a friendſhip for, and are ready to increaſe the revenues and worldly convenience of thoſe who bear the ſacred office, who are alſo called Clergy. I beg leave to obſerve, that the wiſeſt of mankind are ſometimes deceived by words, and patiently ſubmit to gradual and inſenſible uſurpations. Both the words Clergy and Church are an incroachment of the teachers upon you, and all the other hearers of the goſpel. The firſt of them comes from *kleros*, which ſignifies inheritance, and when appropriated to miniſters, ſeems to intimate that they alone are God's inheritance, while ſurely ſome of the people are as much his inheritance as they. The word Church is a Scripture phraſe, and is uſed about one hundred times in the New Teſtament. But of all theſe, in not above one or two at moſt can it be pretended to ſignify the miniſters, excluſive of the people. Therefore if you be friends to the church, take the word in its proper and genuine ſenſe, and admit the people to a due proportion of your favor.

Far be it from me to blame thoſe who ſhew a friendſhip and attachment to miniſters, and wiſh to ſee them comfortably and decently provided for. This is highly neceſſary to free them from that anxiety and ſolicitude which is inſeparable from a poor and dependant ſtate. But why are they to be provided for at all? or why is it an amiable character to be a friend to the church? Surely that the great ends of their ſacred function may be promoted; that, freed from the neceſſity of attending to ſecular purſuits, they may have liberty to beſtow their time and pains for the ſpiritual benefit of thoſe committed to their care.

For this reaſon, I humbly intreat you, who, by your exalted ſtations, only can do it with ſucceſs, to frown upon the luxurious and aſpiring, to encourage the humble and diligent clergyman. The intereſt of religion in this nation, is an object of the higheſt value in itſelf, and inſeparable from our temporal proſperity. On both accounts I hope it will be the object of your moſt tender care; and, in return, may it pleaſe God to make you know to your happy experience the truth of his own word, "Them that honor me, I will honor; but they that de-"ſpiſe me, ſhall be lightly eſteemed."

I am, &c.

A SERIOUS

APOLOGY

FOR THE

ECCLESIASTICAL CHARACTERISTICS.

THE Eccleſiaſtical Characteriſtics is evidently a ſatire upon clergymen of a certain character. It is a ſatire too, which every body muſt ſee was intended to carry in it no ſmall meaſure of keenneſs and ſeverity. This was to be expected from the nature and deſign of the performance. A ſatire that does not bite is good for nothing. Hence it neceſſarily follows, that it is eſſential to this manner of writing, to provoke and give offence. The greateſt ſatiriſts, in all ages, have made juſt as many enemies to themſelves, as they expoſed objects of ſcorn and deriſion to the public.* It was certainly, on this account, eaſy to foreſee what would be the effect of the publication of ſuch a piece, if it was executed in a tolerable manner; and therefore I hope every impartial perſon will not only acquit me of blame, but confeſs I acted very prudently in not ſetting my name to the work.

The event juſtified this precaution. The rage and fury of many miniſters in Scotland when this pamphlet was firſt publiſhed, is known almoſt to all its readers.

* Hiſtory informs us, that Horace, for his admired ſatires, had many private enemies in Rome; and it has been ſaid, that our countryman Mr. Pope, durſt hardly walk the ſtreets of London, ſome years before his death, through fear of being attacked or piſtoled, even when he met with the higheſt encouragement from the public.

The moſt opprobrious names were beſtowed upon the concealed author, and the moſt dreadful threatenings uttered, in caſe they ſhould be ſo fortunate as to diſcover and convict him. One gentleman in particular, who fell under the imputation of being concerned in it, has ever ſince been the object of their deteſtation and reſentment; although I think it remains yet very uncertain, what hand he had, or whether he had any hand at all, in its compoſition; a queſtion which I hope the preſent production, by a compariſon with his other works, will enable the ſharp-ſighted public to determine.

But though I had by good management provided myſelf a ſhelter from the ſtorm, it is not to be ſuppoſed but I heard it well enough rattling over my head. The truth is, I have liſtened with all poſſible attention to the objections raiſed againſt this performance; and found with much concern, that the great endeavor of its enemies has been to repreſent the general deſign of it as contrary to the intereſt of religion; and the ſpirit and manner of it, as inconſiſtent with the Chriſtian temper. The common cry has been, "The author muſt be a man of a bad heart "——No good man could write ſuch a piece." This has given me an irreſiſtible inclination, upon notice that a new edition of it is intended, to ſend into the world, at the ſame time, a ſerious apology for it, not only for my own vindication, but that if it hath any capacity of doing good, this happy purpoſe may not be defeated by the implicit credit given to ſo heavy an accuſation.

In entering upon this taſk, I take the liberty to affirm, that what firſt induced me to write, was a deep concern for the declining intereſt of religion in the church of Scotland, mixed with ſome indignation at what appeared to me a ſtrange abuſe of church-authority in the years 1751 and 1752.* The reaſons of its particular ſtructure

* This refers to the rebuking and depoſing miniſters who did not think themſelves at liberty to join in the ordination of a paſtor without a people. The firſt was done in the caſe of Mr. Adam and the preſbytery of Linlithgow, who declined being preſent at the ſettlement of Torphichen; the ſecond, in the caſe of Mr. Gilleſpie, in the ſettlement of Inverkeithing.

will be given afterwards; in the mean time, the reader may rest assured, that this defence shall be wholly serious, and shall not contain a single proposition which, in its plain and literal meaning, the author does not believe to be true. Not so much as attempting to borrow any assistance from wit and ridicule, he submits his cause to be tried by calm dispassionate reasoning, and only begs the impartial attention of the reader.

To free the question from ambiguity, it will be necessary to consider the performance distinctly, under the three following heads. 1. The subject of it in general; which is confessed to be an attack upon the principles, manners, and political conduct of certain clergymen. 2. Why it is written in an assumed character and ironical style. 3. What occasion was given for it by those to whom it was evidently applied, viz. the ministers of our own church.

I. Let us consider the subject in general, viz. attacking and exposing the characters of clergymen. While I am speaking upon this head, I must take it for granted, that the faults are real; that the satire and reproofs are just, An objection against the performance has been often made to this purpose: "Supposing the things censured "to be true, what end does it serve to publish them?— "If tenderness for the reputation of the offenders could "not prevent such cruel treatment, ought not a regard "for the edification of others, and the success of the gos- "pel in their hand, to have disposed a good man to throw "a veil over their infirmities? Is not religion wounded "through their sides, and occasion given to infidels to tri- "umph?"

In answer to this, I confess myself to have very different views of things from those who speak in this manner. Nay, I believe, that though there are some who speak as they think, yet it is much more frequently the language of those who wish nothing so much as the undisturbed indulgence of themselves in sloth, luxury, or grosser crimes. I am altogether at a loss to know what is the argument in reason, or the precept in Scripture, which makes it criminal to censure ministers when they deserve it. That their station, like that of all other persons of

influence, or in public employment, ſhould make men very tender and cautious how they take up an evil report againſt them, and careful never to do it but on good grounds, I readily allow; but where the character is really bad, I hold it as a firſt principle, that as it is in them doubly criminal and doubly pernicious, ſo it ought to be expoſed with double ſeverity. This is ſo far from being contrary to the intereſt of religion, even when done by a clergyman, that nothing can be more honorable to it, than to ſhow that there are ſome ſo bold as to reprove, and ſo faithful as to withſtand the corruptions of others. How far ſecret wickedneſs ſhould be concealed, or ſcenes of iniquity not laid open, and ſo ſin turned into ſcandal in miniſters, is a matter that would require a very careful and accurate diſcuſſion, and admits of many exceptions: but if, in any caſe, erroneous doctrine, or degeneracy of life, is plain and viſible; to render them completely odious, muſt certainly be a duty. When it is not done, it provokes men to conclude the clergy all combined together, like "Demetrius and the craftſmen," and more concerned for their own power and credit, than for the intereſt and benefit of thoſe committed to their charge.

That irreligion and infidelity has made a rapid progreſs among us for ſome time paſt, is a certain, and a melancholy truth. Well! perhaps I ſhall be told, That I have contributed to ſtrengthen the cauſe of infidelity among the quality and gentry, by giving them ſuch a repreſentation of the clergy. I anſwer, That gentlemen's forming a bad opinion of clergymen contributes to promote infidelity, I will by no means deny; ſo far from it, I affirm that without this, all other cauſes put together, would not be able to produce it in any great degree. The great, as well as the vulgar, are always more influenced in their regard for, or contempt of religion, by what they ſee in the characters and behavior of men, than by any ſpeculative reaſonings whatever. This is what they themſelves make no ſcruple, on many occaſions, to confeſs. Biſhop Burnet, in his Diſcourſe of the Paſtoral Care, acquaints us, that, "having had much free converſation "with many that have been fatally corrupted that way,

" they have very often owned, that nothing promoted " this so much in them as the bad opinion which they " took up of clergymen. They did not see in them," says he, " that strictness of life, that contempt of the " world, that zeal, that meekness, humility and charity, " that diligence and earnestness, with relation to the " great truths of the Christian religion, which they rec- " koned they would most certainly have, if they them- " selves firmly believed it; therefore they concluded, that " those whose business it was more strictly to inquire into " the truth of their religion, knew that it was not so cer- " tain as they themselves, for other ends endeavored to " make the world believe it was."

But the great, or rather the only question yet remains: Did the publication of the characteristics give the first occasion to such reflections in Scotland? Was the first information gentlemen had of the characters of the clergy drawn from that performance? This, which must be the very foundation of the objection we are considering, is not true: and indeed it is not possible in the nature of things, that it should be true. If there be any such thing as corruption among the clergy, by neglect of duty, luxury in dress or table, laxness in principle, or licentiousness of practice, it can be no secret to people of figure and fashion. It is commonly in their society that the most free conversation and unclerical carriage is found among gentlemen of the sacred order. And though some of the laity who regret such indecencies, may have so much good manners as to forbear upbraiding them openly, and others may perhaps not be displeased at the removal of all restraints, either from the discipline or example of ministers yet it is well known how little to their advantage persons of both sorts have talked, long before the Characteristics had a being. So that, instead of any public rebuke being the occasion of gentlemen's forming a bad opinion of the clergy, the last, on the contrary, gave a manifest occasion for the first, if it did not make something of that kind indispensibly necessary.

Many wrong opinions arise from confounding things that have some relation to one another, but are notwith-

ſtanding eſſentially diſtinct. Thus what ought really to be imputed to the crime, is frequently imputed to the puniſhment. Becauſe a bad opinion of the clergy leads men to infidelity, therefore, ſay ſome, cover their failings, and palliate their crimes: to expoſe them is doing hurt to religion. On the contrary, I reckon it is far more concluſive to ſay, Becauſe the bad characters of the clergy are extremely hurtful to religion, let them be told, that the greateſt ſtrictneſs and purity of manners is expected from them; and if any will not comply, let the guilty perſons be chaſtiſed, that the honor of the order may be preſerved. I was never better pleaſed with a ſtory than one I have read of the late Duke of Orleans, regent of France. It happened, that during his regency, one of the French princes of the blood was convicted of committing robbery on the highway. Great interceſſion was made with the regent, to ſave him from the ignominy of a public execution, which, it was alledged, would be an indelible ſtain upon the royal blood. To this the Duke replied, The royal blood is indeed deeply ſtained, but it was ſtained by the commiſſion of the crime; the puniſhment will only ſerve to waſh out the ſtain as far as that is now poſſible.

Chriſtians may, if they pleaſe, learn what ought to be their own conduct, by obſerving the contrary conduct of infidels, who generally underſtand what is the real intereſt of that unhappy cauſe. It is of no conſequence to an infidel to make it appear that there are ſome miniſters bad men. His great buſineſs is, to tranſfer the faults of particulars to the whole order, and to inſinuate, that, "prieſts of all religions are the ſame." This appears from the general ſtrain of their writings and converſation. Neither is it uncommon to ſee infidels, who on all occaſions diſcover the moſt rancorous malice againſt miniſters of the goſpel in general, maintain the greateſt intimacy with ſome particulars of that denomination. Whether their friendſhip is an honor or diſgrace to the perſons ſo diſtinguiſhed, I think is not difficult to determine. However, in oppoſition to this conduct, every real Chriſtian, while he maintains upon his mind the

deepeſt ſenſe of the importance and uſefulneſs of the ſacred office, ſhould, at the ſame time, hold in deteſtation thoſe who, by an unworthy behaviour, expoſe it to contempt.

That I am not ſingular in this opinion, appears from the hiſtory of the Chriſtian church in every age. Were it not that it might be conſidered as an unneceſſary oſtentation of learning, I could eaſily ſhew, from almoſt every writer renowned for piety and worth, with what boldneſs and ſeverity they treated the corrupt clergy of their own times. And what is remarkable, though their characters have now received a ſanction from their antiquity, and indeed a luſtre from this very zeal and fidelity; yet while they lived, their invectives were conſtantly complained of by the indolent or vicious of their contemporaries, as injurious to the intereſts of religion. That this was the caſe at the reformation, may be eaſily ſeen by any who will look but a little into the writings of that age.——In our neighbor country, when Mr. Richard Baxter wrote his Gildas Salvianus, or, Reformed Paſtor, which contained a very plain and very ſevere reprehenſion of his brethren the clergy, the ſame objection was made againſt the publication of it, at leaſt in the Engliſh language, by ſome prudent ſofteners. To this he anſwers, among other things, as follows. "When the ſin "is open in the ſight of the world, it is in vain to at- "tempt to hide it; and ſuch attempts will but aggravate "it, and increaſe our ſhame. If the miniſters of En- "gland had ſinned only in Latin, I would have made "ſhift to have admoniſhed them in Latin; but if they "will ſin in Engliſh, they muſt hear it in Engliſh. Un- "pardoned ſin will never let us reſt, though we be at ever "ſo much care and coſt to cover it. Our ſin will ſurely "find us out, though we find not it. And if he that con- "feſſeth and forſaketh be the man that ſhall have mercy, "no wonder then if he that covereth it proſper not. If "we be ſo tender of ourſelves, and loth to confeſs, God "will be leſs tender of us, and indite our confeſſions for "us.—Too many that have ſet their hand to this ſacred "work, do ſo obſtinately proceed in ſelf-ſeeking, negli-

" gence, and pride, &c. that it is become our neceſſary " duty to admoniſh them. If we could ſee that ſuch " would reform without reproof, we could gladly forbear " the publiſhing of their faults; but when reproofs them- " ſelves do prove ſo ineffectual, that they are more of- " fended at the reproof, than at the ſin, and had rather " that we ſhould ceaſe reproving, than themſelves ſhould " ceaſe ſinning, I think it is time to ſharpen the remedy."

I ſhall produce but one example more, to which I beg the attention of thoſe who have been inadvertently taught to think that one who endeavors to expoſe the characters of the clergy cannot be a good man. Does not all hiſtory bear teſtimony to the learning, piety, and worth of the gentlemen of the Port-royal, a ſociety of Janſeniſts, who, a little more than a hundred years ago, made a moſt violent attack upon the Jeſuits in France; particularly M. Paſcal, in his Provincial Letters, which are written almoſt entirely in the way of wit and humor. Theſe pieces are ſtill univerſally admired; nor are they at this time counted any objection to his character for piety and integrity. At the time of publication, however, the very ſame objections which are now made to the Characteriſtics, were made to his writings.*

The reader may poſſibly recollect, that I hinted above, a ſuſpicion, that many are not ſincere in offering this objection. One reaſon for this ſuſpicion I am almoſt aſhamed to mention, for the reproach which it brings, in my apprehenſion, upon many members of the church of Scotland; but as it is well known, it is unneceſſary to conceal it, and in my own defence I am intitled to repeat it. There have been, within theſe few years, writings publiſhed in Scotland directly levelled againſt religion itſelf, taking away the very foundations of morality, treating our Redeemer's name with contempt and deriſion, and bringing in doubt the very being of a God. Writings of this kind have been publicly avowed, and the names of the authors prefixed. Now, where has been the zeal of the

* This any man may ſee, who will look at his eleventh letter, and ſome of the ſubſequent ones, as well as the notes on them, which are generally aſcribed to Mr. Arnauld.

enemies of the Characteriſtics againſt ſuch writings? Have they moved for the exerciſe of diſcipline againſt the writers? Have they ſupported the motion when made by others? Are not books in oppoſition to the goſpel, and abuſing all clergymen, as ſuch, more contrary to the intereſt of religion, than one which only impeaches the fidelity of a part of that order, from at leaſt a profeſſed concern for the honor of the whole? Does not this tempt men to ſay, as was ſaid an age ago by Moliere in France, or by ſome there, on occaſion of a play of his called the Tartuffe, That a man may write what he pleaſeth againſt God Almighty in perfect ſecurity; but if he write againſt the characters of the clergy in power, he is ruined for ever.

Another reaſon why I ſuſpect the ſincerity of the enemies of the Characteriſtics, when they pretend a regard for the intereſt of religion as the ground of their diſpleaſure, is, that it hath often happened, that both ſpeakers and writers have charged another party of the miniſters of the church of Scotland with hypocriſy and deceit, the moſt villainous of all characters; and yet it never occurred to theſe gentlemen, that ſuch a charge was hurtful to the intereſt of religion. I am now to let the reader into a ſecret. What very much contributed or rather indeed what chiefly brought me to a reſolution of publiſhing the Characteriſtics, was a pamphlet publiſhed a few months before it, called, A juſt view of the conſtitution of the church of Scotland. This univerſal uncontradicted fame attributed to the late Dr. H——n: and the expreſs purpoſe of it is, to repreſent a certain ſet of miniſters, as agitators of the people, and in general, as not acting upon conſcience, even where they pretend it, but from a love of popularity. Beſides this he tells a ſtory, which he calls a "ſcene of iniquity," with the initial letters of the names of the perſons ſuppoſed to be guilty. Was ever this pamphlet charged by my enemies as contrary to the intereſt of religion? It will not be pretended. Now, I ſhould be glad to know, what it is that makes the diſcovery of a ſcene of iniquity, when committed by ſome whom I muſt not name, contrary to the intereſt of religion, but the diſcovery of a ſcene of iniquity committed by certain

others, no way contrary to it at all? I am not able to find any reaſon for this difference of judgment but one, which is not very honorable to them, viz. That perhaps ſcenes of iniquity ſuppoſed to be committed by them, are more probable in themſelves, and actually obtain more credit, than thoſe which they alledge againſt others. I do not affirm that this is the reaſon: but I think, ſince they had been the aggreſſors, both in cenſuring miniſters for ſcrupling obedience to their unconſtitutional deciſions, and attacking their characters in print; if ſome nameleſs author thought fit to retaliate the injury in the laſt kind, and did it with ſo great ſucceſs, they ought to have lain as quiet under it as poſſible, both from equity and prudence; from equity, becauſe they had given the provocation; and from prudence, becauſe in fact their conduct tempted many to ſay, The charge muſt have been juſt, or it would have been treated with contempt; the ſtroke muſt have been well aimed, the wound muſt have been very deep, ſince the ſcar continues ſo long, and is never like to be either forgotten or forgiven.

This, however, is in itſelf but of ſmall moment. It would be of little conſequence whether their conduct had been reaſonable and conſiſtent or not, if the objection itſelf were juſt. But I hope it appears very clearly, from what I have offered above, that ſuppoſing the conduct of the clergy to be unbecoming their profeſſion, a regard to religion not only permits, but loudly calls for a ſevere reprehenſion of it. This is agreeable to the ſentiments and practice of the wiſeſt and beſt men in every age. There have been indeed a few exceptions: but the lenity which ſome excellent perſons have ſhewn to the vices of the clergy, has been generally reckoned among their weakneſſes and not their virtues. I mention this, leſt it ſhould come into any perſon's mind, what is related of Conſtantine the Great, viz. that when he received a bundle of papers, which he was told contained accuſations againſt the vicious part of the clergy, he publicly burnt them, after having taken an oath that he did not know what they contained; and added, that though he ſhould ſee a biſhop in the very act of a crime that ſhall be name-

leſs in Engliſh,* he would cover him with his purple. If the account be true, and this be the charity which ſome plead for with ſo great earneſtneſs, one can hardly help crying out, O Emperor, great was thy charity!

II. According to the diſtribution I made of my ſubject, the next point is, To account for the Characteriſtics being written in an aſſumed character and ironical ſtyle. "If concern for the intereſt of religion prompted you," ſay ſome, "to attack the characters of the clergy, why "was it not done in a ſerious way? Would it not have "been better, gravely to have convicted them of their ſin, "and warned them of their danger, than to ſet them in a "ridiculous point of light, and expoſe them to the pub-"lic ſcorn?" This objection, I am ſenſible, made an impreſſion on ſome well-meaning perſons; and therefore it will be neceſſary to conſider it with care. A very good man, when he firſt read the Characteriſtics, expreſſed himſelf thus: "Alas! if there was occaſion given for it, "would it not have been better to have had recourſe to "prayer than to ſatire? In general, I humbly apprehend, there is no oppoſition between theſe two means; and therefore, in many caſes, it is proper to employ both. Let me therefore intreat the attention of the reader, while I briefly conſider, firſt, the lawfulneſs of employing ridicule in ſuch a cauſe; and ſecondly, what particular circumſtances concurred to render it the moſt proper method, if not in a manner neceſſary, in the inſtance before us.

That it is a lawful thing to employ ridicule in ſuch a cauſe, is evident from the very higheſt authority. There are many inſtances of irony in the ſacred writings. In the third chapter of Geneſis, ver. 22. we have an expreſſion uſed by God himſelf, which interpreters do generally ſuppoſe to be in irony: and as it is of the moſt ſevere and penetrating kind, in a moſt deplorable calamity, ſo I cannot well imagine what other rational meaning can be put upon the words: "And the Lord God ſaid, Be-"hold, the man is become as one of us, to know good "and evil." It muſt be remembered, that Adam had

* Alienum torum labefactantem.

broke his Maker's command, from a fooliſh expectation, upon the devil's promiſe, of becoming like God. On this, an ancient interpreter ſays, "Adam deſerved to be deri- "ded in this manner; and he was made more deeply "ſenſible of his folly by this ironical expreſſion, than by "any other that could have been uſed." The conduct of Elijah, and his treatment of the prophets of Baal, is another known example of the ſame kind. It is record- ed, 1 Kings xviii. 27. "And it came to paſs at noon, "that Elijah mocked them, and ſaid, Cry aloud: for he "is a God, either he is talking, or he is purſuing, or he is "on a journey, or peradventure he ſleepeth, and muſt be "awaked."

There are ſeveral inſtances of the ſame manner of ſpeaking in the prophetical books; particularly, the pro- phet Iſaiah, in an admirable manner, and at great length, expoſes the ſottiſh folly of idolaters. The paſſages are well known; as are alſo ſome in the apoſtolic writings; and therefore I omit them for the ſake of brevity: and on- ly mention an expreſſion of our Saviour himſelf, who, though a man of ſorrows, and in a ſtate of humiliation, yet in ſome places uſes a language plainly ironical; as in John x. 32. "Many good works have I ſhewed you from "my Father; for which of theſe works do ye ſtone me?" It was certainly making them very ridiculous, to aſk them, for which of his good works they propoſed to ſtone him, as well as it was the ſtrongeſt way of ſignifying that he had never done any works among them but ſuch as were good.

After theſe examples, none will be ſurpriſed when I ſay, that the moſt grave and venerable of the fathers have not only wrote in this manner themſelves, but aſſerted its ne- ceſſity and uſe. To be convinced of this, let any man only read St. Jerom, in his letters, and his writings againſt Jovian and the Pelagians; Tertullian, in his apology againſt the folly of idolaters; Auguſtine, Irenæus, and Bernard, and many others of the moſt approved charac- ters. It is indeed founded upon the plaineſt reaſon.— There is commonly a pride and ſelf-ſufficiency in men under the dominion of error, which makes them deaf to

advice, and impregnable to grave and serious reasoning: neither is there any getting at them till their pride is levelled a little by this dismaying weapon. But lest the reader should be less willing to yield to my reasoning than to that of greater men, I shall beg leave to translate three passages from three different writers in distant ages, which could not be more applicable to the times in which they lived, than they are to my present purpose.

The first is from Tertullian: "That which I have "done, is nothing else but a play before the real combat. "I have rather pointed out the wounds which might be "given you, than given them in effect. If there are "places which oblige people to laugh, it is because the "subjects themselves are ridiculous. There are many "things which ought to be treated with contempt and "mockery, through fear of giving them weight, and "making them important by seriously debating them. "Nothing is more justly due to vanity than derision; and "it belongs to the truth to smile, because it is chearful, "and to despise its enemies, because it is assured of victo-"ry. It is true, we ought to be careful that the raillery "be not low, and unworthy of the truth; but if that be "attended to, and one can use it with address and deli-"cacy, it is a duty to do so."

The Second passage is from St. Augustine, in the following words: "Who will dare to say, that the truth "ought to remain defenceless against the attacks of falf-"hood? That the enemies of religion shall be permitted "to terrify the faithful with strong words, and to entice "or seduce them by agreeable turns of wit; but that be-"lievers ought never to write but with such a coldness of "style as to lull the reader asleep?"

The third passage is from Pascal, in the eleventh of his Provincial Letters: "As the truths of the gospel are "the proper objects both of love and respect, so the errors "which are opposite to them are the objects both of hatred "and contempt. There are two distinct qualities in "the first, a divine beauty which renders them amiable, "and a sacred majesty which renders them venerable; "there are also in the last, a guilt and impiety which

" renders them horrible, and a deluſion and folly which " renders them ſilly and contemptible. Wherefore, as " the ſaints have always, for truth, the united affections " of love and fear ; ſo, for error, they have alſo the cor- " reſpondent ſentiments of hatred and contempt. Their " zeal equally diſpoſes them to reſiſt the malice of bad " men with boldneſs and courage, and to diſcredit their " folly by deriſion and ſcorn."

That it is lawful in ſome caſes to uſe ridicule, I hope is now ſufficiently proved. The truth is, though it is common and natural for men to cry out, That this is an unbecoming manner of handling the ſubject, when their own miſtakes are expoſed; yet I have met with very few controverſial writers, who do not, in proportion to their ſkill, endeavor to enliſt ridicule in the ſervice of reaſon. It is often indeed a ſorry and motley mixture of grave and comic; but it ſufficiently ſhews the natural ſenſe men have of the propriety, not only of contradicting what is falſe, but ſmiling at what is abſurd: I might therefore very juſtly reſt my defence here. It was, in the firſt place my buſineſs to judge, whether there was ſufficient occaſion given for ſuch an attempt, as well as, whether I was endowed with proper talents for the execution. After this, it fell of courſe to the readers to determine, how far I had judged right in either, or both of theſe particulars.

But as, in fact, it was not merely the lawfulneſs of the thing in general, nor any confidence of my own untried ability in that way of writing, that determined me to make choice of it, but ſome particular circumſtances that ſeemed to render it neceſſary. I ſhall now take the liberty of laying them before the reader. The firſt of them is the reigning taſte of the age. Nothing is more plain, than that a certain levity of mind prevails at preſent among all ranks; which makes it very hard to fix their attention on any thing that is ſerious. The very title of a grave diſcourſe is ſufficient to diſguſt many, and to prevent them from ever inquiring what it contains : ſo that though I reſolve to adhere to my promiſe at firſt ſetting out, I am this moment writing with but little hope, that

above one twentieth part of the readers of the former treatiſe will vouchſafe it a peruſal. Nay, it is ten to one that many will deny this to be the work of the former author; and affirm. that it is greatly inferior in point of ſtyle; that is to ſay, no ſtyle appears to them juſt or pure, but that which is humorous and poignant.

Beſides levity, or an averſion to what is ſerious, there is another characteriſtic of the preſent age, which is perhaps the child of the former; I mean ſloth, or an unwillingneſs to beſtow great or long application of mind upon any ſubject, be it what it will. This diſpoſition has been wonderfully gratified, and wonderfully increaſed by the generality of writers among us for ſome time paſt. The authors of periodical publications, ſuch as reviews, magazines, and even common newſpapers, for their own intereſt, have long vied with one another in the variety and livelineſs of the pieces which make up their ſeveral collections. From peruſing theſe, it is ſo eaſy to get a little ſuperficial knowledge of every ſubject, that few look any further for the means of forming their opinions in religion, government, or learning. Another ſpecies of compoſition, proceeding upon the ſame principles, is novel-writing. What an inundation of theſe we have had theſe twenty years paſt in Great-Britain, is ſufficiently known. It would even be an entertainment to enumerate them by their titles, and ſee what proportion they make of the whole new books in any given period of time.

From theſe circumſtances, it is eaſy to ſee what an intending author muſt have before his eyes. Thoſe who have long had their appetites quickened by variety of diſhes, and the moſt pleaſing ſauces, are not able to reliſh plainer, though, to thoſe who can uſe it, far better and more ſolid food. This made it neceſſary for me to fall upon a method of compoſition which might have ſome chance to procure the attention of the public; and I could think of none more proper than irony; which, when well executed, is almoſt univerſally pleaſing. Beſides, I muſt acknowledge, that the conduct of the prevailing party did often appear to me in a very ridiculous light; and never more ſo, than when the Characteriſtics

were publiſhed. Moderation had been long a faſhionable or cant phraſe among them; and yet they were running headlong into the moſt violent and tyrannical meaſures. They made great pretences to charity, and a large manner of thinking; and as a teſtimony of it, very modeſtly ſuppoſed, that all who did not form the ſame opinions in religion and government with themſelves, were weak ſilly fools, except two or three knaves who had the direction of the reſt. This, I do affirm, was not barely hinted, but openly and confidently aſſerted; ſo that I never knew greater bigots, in the proper and genuine ſenſe of that word. How far my attempt would be ſucceſsful, could only be gueſſed at; but I imagined, that if I could exhibit them to the public in the ſame light in which they appeared to myſelf, they would make a pretty comical figure: and ſo it happened in fact. My firſt intention was only to have publiſhed, in May 1753, a half ſheet, containing the maxims themſelves, under the title of, "A "liſt of ſelf-evident truths:" but that having been neglected, upon the provocation hinted at above, the illuſtrations were added, and ſent abroad a few months afterwards, in the form they now bear.

Another circumſtance which ſeemed to render this way of writing neceſſary, was the little regard that had been paid to ſeveral well written treatiſes of a ſerious kind. The perſons chiefly pointed at in the Characteriſtics had greatly relaxed diſcipline in point of morals; had, by a courſe of deciſions, planted the country with uſeleſs miniſters; and though the whole office of ordination proceeds upon the ſuppoſition of a call from the people, gravely admitted them without any call at all. This, when done as a part of the public worſhip of God, as it always is, muſt be conſidered by every impartial perſon, not only as a piece of groſs abſurdity, and mocking of the people, but a piece of flagrant impiety, and mocking of God. Conſcientious miniſters abſented themſelves from theſe pretended ordinations, till at laſt it came into the heads of their enemies to force them to be preſent under pain of the higheſt cenſures of the church. They had the hardineſs all the while to affirm, that this was abſolutely neceſſary to

support the constitution; although every man must agree, that if any of our fathers, who lived about fifty years ago, were to rise up out of his grave, he would say, it was the constitution turned upside down. Many attempts had been made to reason with them, and clear appeals to the history and standing acts of the church; but all were trodden under foot by the decisions of the annual assemblies, in their judicative capacity. Nay, they at last became so confident of their own power, and so deaf to all reasoning on the subject, that they refused even to read what was written by those of different sentiments; and when they did read it, disdained to make any answer to it, or attempt to convince them any other way than by the unanswerable argument of deposition. This induced me to write in a manner that has obliged them to hear whether they will or not; and though it has not been so happy as to bring them to conviction, I am sure it was no more than well merited correction.

One other reason I shall mention for making choice of this way of writing, was drawn from the modern notions of philosophy, which had so greatly contributed to the corruption of the clergy. The great patron and advocate for these was Lord Shaftsbury, one of whose leading principles it is, that "Ridicule is the test of truth." This principle of his had been adopted by many of the clergy; and there is hardly any man conversant in the literary world, who has not heard it a thousand times defended in conversation. I was therefore willing to try how they themselves could stand the edge of this weapon; hoping, that if it did not convince them of the folly of the other parts of their conduct, it might at least put them out of conceit with this particular opinion. The last of these I do really think the publication of the Characteristics has, in a great measure effected; at least within my narrow sphere of conversation. It is but seldom we now hear it pretended, that ridicule is the test of truth. If they have not renounced this opinion, they at least keep it more to themselves, and are less insolent upon it in their treatment of others.

I hope the reader will not imagine, that, by wreſting this principle out of the hands of my adverſaries, I intend to adopt it myſelf. There may be truth in it in an equivocal ſenſe; for to be ſure nothing that is true can be really ridiculous: but there are few things more pernicious than this principle, as it is commonly underſtood and applied. It is moſt certain, that many things both true and excellent may, by a perſon poſſeſſed of the talent of humor, be made apparently ridiculous: and this will have its full effect upon the bulk of mankind, who are not able to diſcover where the fallacy lies. Dr. Brown, in his Eſſays on the Characteriſtics, ſays with great propriety, That ridicule is not fitted for the diſcovery of truth; for, ſo far as it is diſtinguiſhed from reaſoning, it "is only putting imagination in the place of "reaſon;" than which few things are more ready to lead us aſtray. But he allows, that it is very proper to "diſ-"grace known falſhood:" and as the application of it to this purpoſe is warranted by the judgment and example of the beſt and wiſeſt men in all ages, there was nothing to hinder me from making uſe of the ſame privilege. In the mean time, if there has been any character of real worth, or any meaſure truly commendable, ridiculed in the treatiſe now under conſideration, let this be ſhown by clear and plain deductions of reaſon, and I am ready to repent of it, and renounce it.

III. This leads me to the third and laſt part of my defence, viz. To ſhow what occaſion was given for ſuch a treatiſe among us. This I confeſs to be abſolutely neceſſary, as it is plainly applied, in the title-page, to the church of Scotland. It will be in vain to have ſhown, that there is nothing ſinful or hurtful in attacking the characters of clergymen, where they act in a manner unworthy of their office, or that this may lawfully be done even in the way of ridicule. The queſtion will ſtill be, Have the miniſters of the church of Scotland really deſerved it? Very great difficulties, however, preſent themſelves in this branch of the ſubject. There are many things demonſtrably true, which it is dangerous to affirm, at leaſt in ſome places. Upon the ſuppoſition, that the

prevailing party in this church is of the spirit and disposition painted in the Characteristics, one would think, a man who should upbraid them with their faults in a direct manner, would be in a sorry situation if ever they should be his judges. The "veritas convitii" would do him very little service, or rather would only serve to envenom their resentment. Have they been already so enraged against me for a little pleasant raillery? and am I so mad as to hope to defend myself, by bringing against the same persons a serious and deliberate accusation? However formidable this difficulty may appear, I am not without hopes, that such of them as have any measure of impartiality and candor, after weighing what is now to be offered, may be more inclined to forgive the attack already made; and, by breaking their attachment to the most corrupt members, recover the merit and dignity of the general body.

With this view let me make a preliminary remark.—Many from the beginning either really did, or at least affected to suppose, that all who joined in the measures carried on by the majority in our general assemblies, were represented in the Characteristics, as infected with every bad principle or practice satirized through the whole. Nothing was farther from the writer's mind. An answer to that objection, such as the nature of the performance would admit, was inserted in the preface to the second edition of the book itself; and I shall now deliver my judgment upon the point, without the least ambiguity. The political measures which have been carrying on for these thirty years past in the church of Scotland, appear to me to be ruinous to the interests of religion. At the same time I am sensible, that there are many worthy and good men who join in most of those measures; and one great end of the Characteristics was, to open the eyes of such persons, both on their employment and company.

A train of circumstances, not always in our own power, sometimes leads good men themselves to support the most corrupt part of a church in their public measures. The boundaries of prudence and zeal are not easily fixed. Union of opinion in politics, often establishes a connex-

ion between men of very oppoſite principles in religion and morals: and there are few greater inſtances of the weakneſs of human nature, than the readineſs of men to give protection and countenance to thoſe who are worſe than themſelves, becauſe they are ſtaunch friends to their party views. Such complacency do ſome take in this, as an exertion of Chriſtian charity and tenderneſs, that it is wonderful to think what they will do, and much more wonderful that they are not aſhamed of it, but openly, and to all appearance honeſtly, defend it.

Whatever unites them with one party, alienates their affection from, and interrupts their correſpondence with the oppoſite: hence extremes are produced on both hands. Perſons of fierce and violent tempers, in their zeal, throw out indiſcriminate reflections; and thoſe engaged in another intereſt, turn a deaf ear to every accuſation, as the mere effect of party-malice and reſentment. Nay, it has been obſerved, that it is ſomewhat natural for clergymen, to be more eaſily irritable at ſuch of their brethren as riſe above them in apparent concern for religion, and zeal for promoting it, than at thoſe who fall below them. The firſt are a reproach to their own conduct and character, the other are a foil to it. So that every one who eſpouſes any bold or vigorous meaſure, may lay his account with a ſenſible coldneſs, even from ſuch of his brethren as are in the next immediate degree below him.

Another very conſiderable difficulty lies in my way. The more the complaint of degeneracy in the church of Scotland is juſt, the more difficult, in one reſpect, it will be to carry a conviction of it to the minds, either of thoſe who are guilty of it, or thoſe who obſerve it. The corruption of a church always implies, a light ſenſe of the evil of ſin; and therefore, however plainly I may make it appear, that ſuch and ſuch facts are done, it will be hard to convince many that they are wrong, at leaſt in any great degree. Many a clergyman will not yield the one half of thoſe things to be ſins that were admitted to be ſo a century ago; nor do they ſee the one half of the evil of ſin, either in clergy or laity, that was once taken for granted. Thoſe who have not the ſame ideas of morality, can never

be supposed to have an equal impression of the insufficiency of the same degree of it. Those who look upon family worship, for instance, as an unnecessary piece of devotion, will never be brought to imagine, that an assembly is one whit worse for consisting of so many members who habitually neglect that duty, if I may be permitted to use so old-fashioned a phrase. On the other hand, though I should produce the names and surnames of those clergy who, mounted upon their coursers at the public races, join the gentlemen of the turf, and are well skilled in all the terms of that honorable art; though I should name those who are to be found at routs and drums, and other polite assemblies of the same nature, and can descant with greater clearness on the laws of the gaiming-table than the Bible, instead of being commanded to produce a proof of the facts, I should expect to find many who denied the relevancy of the crimes.

For this reason, before we go farther, perhaps it will not be improper to introduce a general observation. If we consider the circumstances of the church of Scotland, we may, from a knowledge of human nature, and the experience of past ages, safely affirm, she is in a lax and degenerate state. If it were not so, it would be a miracle. Nay, I will venture to go further, and to say, it would be such a miracle as never happened before. We in this church have enjoyed uninterrupted outward prosperity for more than seventy years; and during all that time, have not only been free from persecution, but have enjoyed the favor and protection of the civil power. If this long course of temporal prosperity has had no effect in bringing on a depravation of our manners, it must needs be a miracle; because it is contrary to the natural course of things; and he that will pretend to find a period, when any such thing happened before, will, I am confident, be unsuccessful. The primitive church was never long without persecution during the three first centuries; yet they had a trial how they could bear prosperity, in the interval between the ninth and tenth persecution, immediately before that dreadful one which they suffered under the Emperor Diocletian. And history

informs us, that though they had not then any civil eſtabliſhment, yet the eaſe and proſperity which they enjoyed had a moſt fatal influence upon their manners.

So long as a miniſter is only in the poſt of greateſt danger, there will be leſs hazard of worldly men endeavoring to puſh themſelves into that ſituation: but as ſoon as that office begins to be conſidered as a quiet and ſafe ſettlement for this life, how can it be but many, from no higher end than worldly intereſt, will get and keep poſſeſſion of it? Therefore, though I were living in Japan, and knew nothing elſe of the church of Scotland, but that ſhe had enjoyed ſuch a courſe of outward proſperity, I would as certainly conclude, that a corruption of manners was affecting even the clergy, as I would that iron which had been long out of the furnace, and had not been rubbed or ſcoured, would be growing ruſty.

After all, it is ſomewhat ſtrange, that this performance ſhould ſtand in need of an apology, or that the accuſation againſt it ſhould be ſo often repeated, That the author muſt be a bad man; and that it is hurtful to the intereſt of religion. This is certainly the clamor of the guilty, and not the judgment of the candid. There is no ſuch apprehenſion of the thing being criminal among thoſe who are the moſt unprejudiced and impartial judges; I mean the laity. It is well known, with how much approbation it was read by them, when firſt publiſhed; and notwithſtanding the love of defamation, which is natural to mankind, I am perſuaded its admirers would have been of quite a different claſs than they generally were, if it had been againſt the intereſt of religion; and that it would have had no admirers at all, if it had been a ſatire without an object.

Let us ſuppoſe any perſon had taken into his head to write a ſatire againſt the miniſters of the church of Scotland, and had thought proper to repreſent them in an oppoſite light; ſuppoſe he had repreſented them as having arrived to ſuch a degree of bigotry, as to believe, that no perſon could be ſaved who had the leaſt doubt of any thing contained in the large ſyſtems of Pictet and Turretine; as ſo ſevere diſciplinarians, that they were conti-

nually harraſing gentlemen and noblemen, and ſummoning them before their ſeſſions, for but walking out in their gardens a little after ſermon on the Lord's day, or ſitting half an hour too long at their bottle after dinner on other days; as ſo rigid and mortified in their own lives, that they were in danger of bringing back the monkiſh auſterity of the church of Rome. Whether would the author of ſuch a pamphlet have been reckoned found in his judgment? Would any body have been ſo idle as to read it? or, if they did, would they not have underſtood it backwards? Whereas, in the preſent caſe, there was a teſtimony given to the truth and juſtice of the characters drawn, by the aſſent and approbation of almoſt every reader.

The laity were not the only witneſſes of its propriety: many of the moſt eminent and reſpectable of the clergy of our neighbor-country, gave evidence in favor of the Characteriſtics. I have been well informed, that the Biſhop of L——n, in converſation with a nobleman of our own country, gave it a high commendation; and added withal: "It ſeems only directed againſt a certain party of the "church of Scotland; but we have many in England to "whom the characters are very applicable." It is alſo ſaid by thoſe who deſerve credit, that the Biſhop of O——d ſpoke much in the ſame way; and ſaid, He wiſhed their own clergy would read it for their inſtruction and correction. And ſeveral have ſeen a letter from the preſent Biſhop of G——r, then Dr. W——n, one of the moſt eminent authors of this age, to a miniſter in Scotland; in which he commends the performance, and, particularly uſes theſe words: "A fine piece of raillery againſt a "party to which we are no ſtrangers here."

Is it to be ſuppoſed, that ſuch perſons, eminent for worth and penetration, would have approved a thing ſo evidently criminal as ſome are pleaſed to think this tract? Or are there indeed perſons of the characters there repreſented in the church of England, and none in the church of Scotland? Shall the perſons above-named openly affirm, there are many ſuch in England; and muſt the man be condemned, without hearing, and without mercy,

who is ſuſpected of hinting there are ſome ſuch in her ſiſter-church? I have often indeed reflected, with ſome ſurpriſe, on the different ſituation of affairs in Scotland and in England. I have ſeen many books printed in England, with the names of the authors, which plainly and without ambiguity affirm, that there are ſome of the clergy proud, ambitious, time-ſervers, and tools of thoſe in power; ſome of them lazy and ſlothful, lovers of eaſe and pleaſure; ſome of them ſcandalous and diſſolute in their manners; ſome of them wholly ignorant and inſufficient; and that all are tolerated by thoſe who preſide. Theſe things they affirm, without the leaſt danger, or apprehenſion of it. But were any man to publiſh a book that had the tenth part of ſuch ſeverity in it, in Scotland, he ought, at the ſame time, to have a ſhip hired to fly to another country.

But the ſtrongeſt of all general proofs of the juſtice of the ſatire in the Characteriſtics, is the behavior of thoſe who are ſuppoſed to be aimed at. The lamentable outcry they made at firſt, the malice and reſentment they have ever ſince diſcovered againſt the author, prove to a demonſtration, that his reproofs are well founded. We ſhall reduce the argument to this ſhort form: Either there was ground for this ſatire, or there was none. If there was none, neither ſurely could there be for one half of the complaints that have been made againſt it, for it would have been perfectly harmleſs. Many, even of the preſent clergy of the church of Scotland, do not find themſelves touched by it in the leaſt degree. If the characters of the reſt lay no more open to the ſtrokes of raillery, why ſhould they have been ſo much diſconcerted by it? If they were not hit, it is impoſſible they could be hurt.

Theſe general arguments, of themſelves, might ſatisfy any impartial perſon; but let us now go a little further, and conſider particularly the preſent ſtate of the church of Scotland, and how far it might give occaſion to the ſatire. It would be tedious to mention every ſingle ſtroke of raillery contained in that performance; but ſo far as it carries a cenſure of principles or characters generally

prevailing, they may be reduced to the three following classes, Doctrine, Discipline, and Government. We shall examine each of these distinctly and separately.

1. Let us consider our present state in point of Doctrine. It is certainly hinted, that there are many who have departed from the old protestant principles contained in our Confession of Faith and Catechisms. And is it possible to deny this fact? Is it not the general complaint of the people through the whole kingdom, that from many pulpits there is little to be heard of the peculiar doctrines of the gospel? or, if they be mentioned at all, it is no more than an awkward and cold compliment to save appearances, while something very different is chiefly insisted on. If I am not mistaken, the leading doctrines, both in the holy Scriptures, and in the confessions of all the protestant churches, are, "The lost and fallen state of man "by nature;—The absolute necessity of salvation through "Jesus Christ;—The pardon of sin by the riches of di-"vine grace, through the imputed righteousness of the "Saviour;—Sanctification and comfort by the Holy "Ghost." These doctrines are of so great moment, and have so extensive an influence on the whole of practical religion, that where they are firmly believed, they will not only be often brought directly in view, but the manner of speaking upon every other subject will be such, as to leave no jealousy of an intended omission; yet certain it is, that many are the complaints upon this subject from every quarter; and therefore I am warranted to infer, either that the doctrine is corrupted, and something else intentionally taught, or that the persons complained of are utterly incapable of expressing themselves in such a manner as to be understood.

I shall now put the argument in another form. There is unquestionably a great difference in point of doctrine between some ministers and others. If the one sort therefore preach the doctrine contained in the Confession of Faith, undoubtedly the others either contradict or omit it. I am persuaded there are some who would be ashamed to have it thought, that they preached this doctrine; and nothing is more plain, than that those who are known to

do ſo in the moſt clear and explicit manner, are uſually the objects of their jealouſy or hatred. It is probable I ſhall be told here, Why do you make theſe general complaints? name the particular perſons, produce your evidence, and prove the charge: they will, in that caſe, be immediately laid aſide. To this I anſwer, that it is a very eaſy thing for a man to preach erroneous doctrine in ſuch a manner, that it ſhall be impoſſible to convict him by a legal proſecution in a free country. Every day ſhows, that men may print ſedition, treaſon, and even blaſphemy, in ſuch a way, that no human law can take hold of it. What then ſhould hinder men to preach hereſy under the ſame prudent diſguiſes? Beſides, what would a proſecution ſignify, if it muſt come before a court, of which, between clergy and laity, perhaps a plurality of members differ little in opinion from the pannel.

My ſubject does not oblige me to ſay any thing upon the excellence and importance of the neglected truths, yet I will take this opportunity of delivering my opinion in a few words. Theſe doctrines I am perſuaded are not only true in themſelves, but the great foundation of all practical religion. Wherever they are maintained and inculcated, ſtrictneſs and purity of life and manners will be their natural effect. On the contrary, where they are neglected, and a pretended theory of moral virtue ſubſtituted in their room, it will immediately and certainly introduce a deluge of profanity and immorality in practice. Of this the preſent ſtate of our own church and nation, compared with that of former periods, is a ſtrong and melancholy proof.

But there is no occaſion for entering further into this ſubject; the ridicule in the Characteriſtics turns not ſo much on the truth or importance of theſe doctrines, as the groſs abſurdity of men's ſubſcribing what they do not believe. However firm a perſuaſion I may have of any ſyſtem of opinions, the right of private judgment and freedom of inquiry, I would wiſh to remain ſacred and inviolable. Thoſe who uſe this liberty, with courage, and with candor, ought to be held in the higheſt eſteem by every one who differs from them. But for men, at their

entrance on the sacred office, solemnly to subscribe to the truth of what all their lives after they endeavor to undermine and destroy, is at once so criminal and so absurd, that no reproof given to it can possibly exceed in point of severity. I take the liberty here of transcribing a passage from a printed sermon, preached at the opening of a synod in Scotland: where, speaking of these subscriptions, the author says, "This is so direct a violation of sincerity, that "it is astonishing to think how men can set their minds "at ease in the prospect, or keep them in peace after the "deliberate commission of it. The very excuses and "evasions that are offered in defence of it, are a disgrace "to reason, as well as a scandal to religion. What suc-"cess can be expected from that man's ministry, who be-"gins it with an act of so complicated guilt? How can "he take upon him to reprove others for sin, or to train "them up in virtue and true goodness, while himself is "chargeable with direct, premeditated, and perpetual per-"jury? I know nothing so nearly resembling it, as those "cases in trade, in which men make false entries, and at "once screen and aggravate their fraud, by swearing, or "causing others to swear, contrary to truth. This is "justly reputed scandalous, even in the world; and yet "I know no circumstance in which they differ, that "does not tend to show it to be less criminal than the "other."*

There may be some of the laity who have themselves an inward aversion to the system of doctrine contained in our Confession and Catechisms, and who, for that reason are pleased with such of the clergy as preach in a different strain: but sure I am, whoever will reflect upon the circumstance of their having all subscribed to it, can never have a high opinion of their conduct upon the whole, but must condemn the insincerity, let the propositions subscribed, be in themselves either true or false.

What is above, may suffice as to doctrine in general. The particular strictures in the Characteristics against a false taste in composition, may well enough answer for

* Mr. Witherspoon's Synod-sermon.

themſelves without any defence. That there have been many inſtances of ſtrange incongruity in this particular, is beyond all queſtion. A cold, heartleſs, indifferent manner of ſpeaking on thoſe ſubjects, in which both ſpeaker and hearer have ſo great, nay no leſs than an infinite concern; an oſtentatious ſwell of words, or a pointed ornamented foppery of ſtyle, ſo ill ſuited to the gravity of the pulpit; an abſtracted, refined, or philoſophical diſquiſition, which, if it has any meaning at all, perhaps not three in the audience can poſſibly underſtand; are theſe imaginary, or are they real characters? If they are characters drawn from real life, where is the ſin or danger of expoſing them? For my own part, I am grieved to ſee ſo little learning among the generality of the miniſters of this church, which is probably owing to their poverty. But I am in a good meaſure comforted with this reflection, that the weakeſt commonly do as much ſervice as the wiſeſt; becauſe, though they were ever ſo willing, they are not able to fill the audience with any admiration of themſelves, and therefore their attention muſt be fixed upon the truths delivered, and not the parts and manner of the ſpeaker.

2. Let us conſider a little the ſtate of the church of Scotland with reſpect to Diſcipline; that is to ſay, the inſpection of the morals of miniſters and people. Upon the moſt deliberate review, all I can find intimated in the characteriſtics upon this ſubject, is, that there is far leſs ſtrictneſs and tenderneſs of converſation, leſs of the appearance of piety and devotion, in perſons of the ſpiritual function, than formerly; and leſs ſeverity, in the exerciſe of diſcipline, upon thoſe who offend.

What ſhall I ſay in defence of this, but that the thing appears to me to be manifeſtly true? There are no particular crimes charged, but in general, levity and worldly converſation, with a neglect of the duties of the ſacred office. And would to God there were not the greateſt cauſe of charging, not merely ſome few diſorderly perſons, not merely the youngeſt ſort in general, but all without exception, as in ſome meaſure guilty. If there is a remarkable increaſe of corruption among the worſt, there will alſo be

a visible declension in zeal and piety among the best. This is what the natural course of things teaches us to expect. It is also what our Saviour himself hath forewarned us of; "Because iniquity shall abound, the love of many "shall wax cold," Matt. xxiv. 12. The present age is a moving example of this, both with respect to the clergy and laity. As there is an alarming degree of infidelity and impiety among many of every rank, so even those who preserve some regard for religion, fall very far short of that eminent and exemplary piety which some alive have seen in Christians of the last age, and of which our fathers have told us.

I am very sensible, that the degeneracy of their own times has been the constant and uniform complaint of religious and moral writers in every age, and that they may be liable to some deception in this particular: but at the same time, the records of history put it beyond all question, that there have been many instances, among all nations, of local and temporary reformation, of local and occasional depravation. Perhaps (though I see no reason for affirming it) the quantity of human virtue, through the whole earth, may be nearly the same in every age; yet certainly it often changes its residence, and leaves one nation, to settle in another. Nay, it seems very reasonable to believe, that as human things are never at a stand, a church and nation, in a quiet and peaceable state, is always growing insensibly worse, till it be either so corrupt as to deserve and procure exterminating judgments, or in the infinite mercy of God, by some great shock or revolution, is brought back to simplicity and purity, and reduced, as it were, to its first principles.

They are much to be blamed therefore, who, because the complaints of some moral writers are exaggerated, and their comparisons not always well founded, treat every thing of this nature as foolish and visionary, refusing so much as to examine whether the charge brought against themselves is just or groundless. On the contrary, I cannot help being of opinion, that it is every man's duty to do all in his power to retard the progress of corruption, by strictness and tenderness in his own personal

walk, fidelity and vigilance in the duties of a public ſtation, and a bold and open teſtimony againſt every thing contrary to the intereſt of true and undefiled religion.

But becauſe we have now chiefly to do with the clergy, let us return to them. If it were proper, I could eaſily produce examples of indecency and impiety in clergymen, ſufficient to fill every ſerious perſon with the deepeſt concern; and which the moſt relaxed moraliſt would not be able to defend; but as I would fain believe, that things very groſs are yet but ſeldom committed among us, and are not commonly known, I ſhall confine myſelf only to things more openly practiſed by many, and too eaſily tolerated by all. This is the more proper, that the book I am defending can ſcarcely be charged with diſcloſing hidden ſcenes, but dwells on ſuch deviations from duty, as are epidemic and general, and rather ſmiles at the ridiculous, than expoſes the guilty part of every character.

There is one circumſtance which I am afraid betrays many into a miſtake. The world in general expects a great "comparative" ſanctity in thoſe who bear the ſacred office; therefore, when miniſters take a little liberty, others think themſelves warranted to take a great deal more. Theſe ſentiments, which are univerſal, contribute to keep the proportion between the clergy and laity always nearly the ſame. When therefore clergymen ſee the diſtance ſtill remaining between them and others, they are ready to forget how far they are both from the place where they ought to have been.

Many things are faults in a miniſter, which, if not innocent, are certainly far leſs criminal in other men. There is alſo a ſpecies of faults which I apprehend do render a miniſter juſtly contemptible, upon which no law, either civil or eccleſiaſtic, can lay hold; and which, for that reaſon, are the proper objects both of ſerious and ſatirical reproof. If one ſet apart to the ſervice of Chriſt in the goſpel, manifeſtly ſhows his duty to be a burden, and does no more work than is barely ſufficient to ſcreen him from cenſure; if he reckons it a piece of improvement, how ſeldom, or how ſhort, he can preach; and make his boaſt how many omiſſions he has brought a pa-

tient and an injured people to endure without complaint; while at the same time, he cannot speak with temper of those who are willing to do more than himself; however impossible it may be to ascertain his faults by a libel, he justly merits the detestation of every faithful minister, and every real Christian.

That such is the case with not a few amongst us, there is the greatest reason to believe. The heavy and general complaints of the people from some quarters, and their gross ignorance in others, prove it beyond contradiction. Those whose conduct is not liable to this imputation, will not find, that they have suffered the smallest injury, in point of character, by the publication of the Characteristics, excepting such as feel the wounds given to their friends as sensibly as those given to themselves. In this case, however, they have an easy remedy: Let them "have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, "but rather reprove them."

I am unwilling to enter farther into the characters of ministers; and therefore shall only add, let the impartial but consider what happened a few years ago, and then say, whether we are not greatly relaxed in point of discipline. Did not several ministers think themselves at liberty to attend the entertainments of the stage? I am sensible, many will immediately pass sentence upon me as a person of very narrow principles, for introducing this as a mark of our depravity. I must however insist upon it, from the united testimony of the best and wisest of the Heathen writers, the uniform sentiments and practice of the primitive church, and the pieces written for the stage in modern times, which any man may peruse, that the performances of hired players have never yet been conducted with so much decency as to deserve the countenance and presence of a minister of Christ. The General Assembly did indeed judicially disapprove of that liberty taken by ministers; but the censure inflicted on the offenders is so gentle, that it was then the opinion of many, it would have a greater tendency to encourage, than to prevent the repetition of the offence. It now appears they judged right; for, if I am not greatly misinformed,

the offence has been repeated ſince that time with abſolute impunity.

If the morals of the clergy themſelves are corrupted, there is all the reaſon in the world to expect, that the reins of diſcipline will be ſlackened as to the diſorders of others. This indeed is ſo notorious, that it would be idle and unneceſſary to attempt a proof of it; and therefore I ſhall only make a reflection or two upon the reception given, not long ago, to a propoſal for cenſuring thoſe writers who had publiſhed and avowed irreligious and immoral ſentiments. It is well known what violent oppoſition this propoſal met with; nor will it ſoon be forgot, what ſort of reaſoning was uſed againſt it; and nothing can ſhow, in a clearer light, that low and languid ſtate to which our diſcipline is now reduced. It was generally repreſented as a ſpecies of perſecution, and as flowing from a perſecuting ſpirit. Upon this I ſhall lay before the reader one or two very ſhort reflections.

1ſt. What is eccleſiaſtical cenſure? Is it any more than a judicial declaration, that ſuch and ſuch things are contrary to the ſpirit of the goſpel, and inconſiſtent with the character of a Chriſtian? No civil penalties follow upon it among us, and no civil penalties ought to follow upon it in any nation. From this it is very plain, that ſuch cenſures, as they are in their nature juſt and neceſſary, ſo they carry the evidence of their juſtice in themſelves. If in any caſe they are miſapplied, and a perſon is condemned for what is laudable, ſuch condemnation can reflect no diſhonor but upon thoſe who pronounce it.

2dly. Whether ſhould we be moſt ready to be provoked at the impudence of profeſſed unbelievers, deſiring to retain the name of Chriſtians, or to ſmile at the abſurdity of calling it perſecution to deprive them of it? If infidelity were a principle, properly ſpeaking, or implied a ſyſtem of real and poſitive opinions, all of that perſuaſion would reckon themſelves bound as honeſt men, to renounce their baptiſm, and every apparent relation to the deluded believers. Inſtead of deſiring admiſſion to what Chriſtians call their privileges, they would conſider the impoſition of ſuch things as a great hardſhip, and beg that

they might have nothing to do with them; and in such a case, certainly due regard would be paid to their tender consciences. As to the charge of persecution, it is the most ridiculous imaginable. They themselves are the aggressors; and though they are our open enemies, think proper to be greatly offended, when we say they are not our friends.

3dly. What can be the meaning of those professing Christians who desire to retain in their communion the enemies of the gospel? Can they, or will they do us any service? Is it possible that they can bring us any honor? Can it be of any benefit to themselves? None of all these. But it must visibly lessen the sanctity of the Christian character in the apprehension of mankind in general, and give the unhappy persons themselves more reason than any other circumstance whatever, to say, the whole is nothing at bottom but deceit and imposition.

3. It now remains only to consider the present state of the church of Scotland with respect to its government. This, so far as it is different from the former, or at least so far as it is touched upon in the Characteristics, relates chiefly to the admission of ministers, with a few hints upon the qualifications and attestation of elders who sit as members in the supreme court.

The admission of ministers into vacant congregations is indeed a matter of the highest moment, and the opposition of sentiments among us upon this subject, probably lies at the bottom of all our other differences. I am also of opinion, that the continuance of what have been commonly called "violent settlements," will have the most certain and powerful influence in banishing religion and decency, and bringing us into a situation of which I charitably believe many who prosecute these measures have not the least suspicion. Willingly therefore, were it in my power, would I contribute to open the eyes of some of my brethren, on the pernicious consequences of their own conduct. But I have the discouragement to reflect, that the force of custom, and the power of prejudice, will probably shut their ears against any thing I have to offer,

In order, if poſſible, to procure ſome attention, let me intreat the reader not to imagine, that I have embraced, or am about to plead in favor of ſuch ridiculous and abſurd notions, as through ignorance or malice are commonly imputed to me and others of the ſame ſentiments, ſuch as, That every Chriſtian, as ſuch, has a right to call a miniſter upon an eſtabliſhment; and that Chriſt hath purchaſed this right for them by his death; and therefore that they ought to aſſert this right, though in the moſt ſeditious and diſorderly manner. We know perfectly well, that it is a queſtion, not of right but of fact, Who has a title to call a miniſter to enjoy the public maintenance? and that none have any title to it at all, excepting thoſe to whom the law gives it. Neither would we contend, that every man ought to have ſuch a right, though we have it in our power to make new laws upon that ſubject. Such a ſeeming equality would be a real inequality. The ſum of my belief in this matter is contained in the following propoſitions. Every man hath a natural right, well ſecured to him in this happy iſland, to judge for himſelf in every thing that regards religion, and to adhere to any miniſter he pleaſes, on the eſtabliſhment, or in oppoſition to it. The legal ſtipend, levied originally from the public, was certainly intended to provide a ſufficient and uſeful paſtor to the people within the bounds of a certain pariſh. He cannot be of much ſervice to them, if they be upon ill terms with him; he can be of none at all, if they will not hear him. No man ought to be compelled, by eccleſiaſtical or civil penalties, to ſubmit in ſuch a caſe; and though he were, ſuch forced religion would be worſe than none. The only inference I draw from theſe principles, is, that decency, and our indiſpenſable duty as church-courts, requires us to make no ſuch ſettlements, without the deepeſt regret, and never without a real neceſſity. Perhaps I might go a little farther, and ſay, that nothing can excuſe us from making them at all, while our office of ordination continues in its preſent form.

The queſtion then reſts preciſely on this ſingle point: Does the law as it now ſtands, compel us to make all theſe

settlements without exception, and without expostulation? If it does, what is the benefit, and what is the meaning of the separate independent jurisdiction of our courts, to which the decision of such causes is committed by law, and secured by the treaty of union? It is in vain to dissemble it, we have brought a great part of the hardships upon ourselves; and those who in their hearts are averse from parochial elections, only pretend the law as a color for their conduct. Were settlements refused when highly inexpedient, and patrons treated with decency, we should have little trouble from them. At any rate, as the persons presented, whether probationers or ministers, are entirely in our power, by authority exerted here, every remaining difficulty would be removed.

I believe this is the first instance that ever happened, of churchmen surrendering the power and influence which the law gave them, into other hands, without resistance, and without complaint: nay, many of them zealously contending for it, and establishing it by their own repeated decisions. It would be no hard matter to point out the real cause or causes of this conduct; but at present I forbear, and leave it to every man to assign them for himself: only I cannot help lamenting, that our noble, venerable, republican constitution, seems to be so near its period. Whether it is likely to undergo any outward change is of little moment: when the spirit is gone, the remaining name and form is not worth being contended for.

But that I may not wholly yield to despondency, since an alteration of measures is yet possible, I shall now lay before the reader a few of the certain consequences of our continuing in the same. When it comes to be a settled point, that a presentation, alone and unsupported, infallibly secures a settlement, they will be openly and scandalously bought and sold. This is the case in England, notwithstanding the strongest laws against simony, and a tremendous oath, which the incumbent himself must take before his induction. And it will always be the case in every country, in the present state of human nature. Our own experience may teach us this. Within these few years, there have been several complaints of simony in

this church, and very great zeal has been ſhown to make laws for preventing it. That zeal is highly commendable: but, alas! it will be quite ineffectual. To ſtrengthen the power of preſentations, and yet prevent ſimony, is juſt as hopeful an attempt, as to open the windows, and keep out the light. The art and invention of intereſted perſons, to find a way of evading laws after they are made, is always far ſuperior to the foreſight of the wiſeſt men, in providing againſt caſes which have not yet happened.

There is one diſtreſſing circumſtance in this proſpect, that ſimoniacal pactions among us will be hurtful and reproachful in an uncommon degree. The ſettlements in Scotland are generally ſmall; they will be every year of ſtill leſs value by the improvements of the country, and increaſing wealth of other claſſes of men. In what a beggarly condition then will thoſe be who have been obliged to pay dear for ſo ſcanty a proviſion? Perhaps the reader will ſay, Happily, few of the purchaſers have any money to give. I believe ſo: but this will not mend the matter; for the moſt mean and ſordid, perhaps ſcandalous, compliances muſt come in the place of money. I am aſhamed even to mention ſome of the ways by which it is undoubtedly certain preſentations will be, becauſe they have been procured. Can any miniſter think of this without the deepeſt concern?

Such a miniſtry muſt fall into the loweſt and moſt contemptible ſtate, through poverty and ignorance. We differ much from the church of England. In that church, though there are many of the inferior clergy in the moſt abject condition, there are alſo many dignified perſons, as they are called, who enjoy ample revenues and great eaſe. Theſe have noble opportunities for ſtudy, and are enabled to diſtinguiſh themſelves by works of literature. By this means the church of England derives a luſtre from the characters and writings of particular members, which ſhe does not deſerve for the general frame of her conſtitution. But what muſt be the caſe in Scotland? Shall we venture to look a little further into futurity? Have our countrymen ſo little ſpirit as to ſubmit to ſo much miſery and ſcorn? No; it is more than probable ſome of them,

at once ſtimulated by ambition, and compelled by neceſſity, will gradually alter the conſtitution. They will introduce ſinecures and pluralities, that they themſelves may live in ſplendor and dignity, while the remaining part ſhall be thruſt down to a ſtate more deſpicable than ever. It is in vain to think, that the equality of votes in a General Aſſembly will hinder this: for as power follows property, a very few perſons enriched by additional ſalaries, with the faithful aſſiſtance of thoſe who are dazzled with the ſame expectations, will eaſily govern the reſt. The truth is, many of them, deſpairing of ſucceſs, and ill able to bear the expence of travelling, will ſtay at home, and let them do juſt as they pleaſe.

The above is no doubt a very melancholy proſpect, and will in time have a moſt malignant influence upon the morals of the clergy. But the truth is, the ſettlement of pariſhes by preſentations, is directly and immediately hurtful to the characters of thoſe who are training up for the ſacred office. When they know that their future ſettlement does not depend upon the apoſtolic qualification, their being "of good report," but upon intereſt with the great, it muſt neceſſarily introduce, in many caſes, licentious and irregular practices, as well as habituate them to fawning and ſervility. There is more danger in this than many apprehend. On conſulting the hiſtory of the church, we ſhall find few characters more odious in clergymen, than ambition, and open ſolicitation of eccleſiaſtical preferment. I am ſorry that ſo much way has been given to this already, without having been obſerved. Small changes in forms and language, do often introduce great changes in manners and characters. In ancient times men could hardly be perſuaded to take on them the weighty and important office of a biſhop. In times not very diſtant, in our own church, the miniſter or probationer called, was never conſidered as a party, but as the ſubject concerning which the proceſs was carried on by the callers or refuſers. But they have been for ſome time paſt declared to be parties: they begin to attend the cauſe, to appear at the bar, to urge their claim, to conſider the people who are to be under their charge as their ad-

verſaries, and too often to treat them with contempt and diſdain.

I know ſome treat with great neglect the danger of a lax and immoral miniſtry, from the preſent method of ſettling vacancies. So long as they are of this mind, it is no wonder they continue in the practice; for it can be of very little conſequence how men are choſen, if they are fit for the office. They tell us, an edict is ſerved before admiſſion, where every man has acceſs to object againſt the life or doctrine of the preſentee. The effect of this will be very ſmall. Judicial proceſſes of that kind are always expenſive and invidious, often difficult, and ſometimes dangerous. How few then will be ſo public ſpirited as to undertake them? The example of England may ſatisfy us of this. It is as competent to proſecute a man for error or immorality in England as in Scotland: yet what perſon or pariſh ever thinks of making the experiment?

Others tell us, "It is all in your own power: why do "you licenſe improper men? it is impoſſible to pre-"ſent any man who has not a regular licenſe." How ſurpriſing is it, that perſons of ever ſo little reflection ſhould make uſe of this argument? It proceeds upon a ſuppoſition, which the leaſt knowledge of human nature muſt ſhow to be unreaſonable, viz. That every preſbytery, through the whole kingdom, will be unalterably faithful and vigilant. If there be but a corrupt or negligent majority in any one of them, the licenſe will operate over all. Nay, let them be ſuppoſed ever ſo faithful, they may be deceived by an hypocrite, or not able to find ſuch proofs of what they ſtrongly ſuſpect, as to found and ſupport a ſentence of refuſal. The more we conſider the matter in every poſſible view, we ſhall find, that a parochial election of miniſters would be a better ſecurity for regularity and decency in the clergy, than all the laws that ever were framed on the ſubject. Frequently men cannot, and ſometimes they will not, execute the laws; but this rule would operate uniformly and powerfully, and would execute itſelf.

I add only one other unhappy conſequence of continuing the preſent method of ſupplying vacancies. If a pre-

sentation must supercede all judgment of the church-courts, as to the propriety of an ordination, and even the expediency of a translation, we may expect to see some of the weakest, and most contemptible ministers, settled in the most conspicuous and important charges. Persons of this character are not always free from vanity and ambition, nor always destitute of interest by male or female connexions. We have had some instances of this kind already; but much greater and more shameful may be expected, so soon as presentations have acquired an irresistible power. It will be said, perhaps, They have had all the force in law, for above forty years, that it is likely they ever will have. I answer, that is very true; but every one knows their very different effect in practice at the beginning and at the end of that period. Patrons continued long to pay a regard to the opinion of the heritors, according to rank and character in the congregation concerned. As they found their own strength increasing, however, they paid gradually less and less; they now pay very little; and the time seems just at hand, when they will pay none at all.

This argument will, I hope, have the greater weight, that I have known instances of different persons, both among the clergy and the laity, who had concurred in supporting presentations in other cases, but who were both alarmed and provoked when they themselves came to be treated in a tyrannical manner. The heritors in general indeed have been long made instrumental in bearing down the common people; and this being finished, they themselves, as is almost constantly the case in political struggles, must feel the weight of that authority which they have established. The evil hath taken so deep root, that it is somewhat uncertain whether a remedy be now possible; nay, it is still more uncertain, whether any resistance will be seriously attempted. The consequences however are like to be so terrible, that they may well justify complaint, and, in particular, be my excuse for endeavoring to expose the conduct of those whom I considered as betraying the liberties of the public.

As to the cenſures inflicted on miniſters who refuſed to be preſent at the ordination of miniſters to no body, I ſhall ſay but little, becauſe that ſeverity ſeems to have ceaſed. Several miniſters have abſented themſelves, in like caſes ſince the depoſition of Mr. Gilleſpie, and yet have eſcaped with impunity. The reaſon probably is, the thing is now ſo common, that the odium attending it is become inconſiderable, and not worth the pains of an endeavor to divide it. But as that meaſure was once like to become univerſal, may I not obſerve, that it remains in the hiſtory of our church an example of what, alas! appears but too plainly in the hiſtory of every church, That, in proportion as authority is relaxed in inforcing the laws of God, it is commonly ſtretched and carried to exceſs in ſupport of the unneceſſary, doubtful, or pernicious commandments of men. Let any man produce a period in which there was leſs rigour in puniſhing miniſters for neglect of parochial duties, or irregularity in private practice, than when they were threatened with depoſition if they refuſed to join in theſe not very honorable ſettlements, Nay, though we ſhould look upon the preſervation of church-authority as a matter of great moment, it was not obedience to the ſtanding laws, on which the welfare of the whole, depends, that was ſo ſtrictly required, but compliance with or approbation of the deciſions of the annual Aſſemblies in their judicative capacity. It hath often ſurpriſed me to hear the plea of conſcience, in ſuch caſes, treated as a mere pretence. What ſentiments muſt thoſe perſons have, who look upon it as a thing incredible, that a man ſhould ſcruple being preſent at an ordination where ſome of the anſwers to the queſtions put to the candidate, though joined with in a part of divine worſhip, are either directly falſe, or wholly abſurd?

This part of the Apology has been ſo much lengthened out, that I wholly omit the atteſting unqualified and admitting unatteſted elders into the church courts. There is indeed ſo manifeſt a breach of truth in the one caſe, and of law and order in the other, that if men do not ſee it themſelves, it muſt be owing to ſuch invincible prejudice as it is in vain to contend with.

Thus I have laid before the reader, in a ſerious and candid manner, what I hope will appear a ſufficient apology for this offenſive performance. Nothing could have induced me to the attempt, but the unwearied endeavors of many to repreſent it as an evidence of a bad temper and unchriſtian diſpoſition, which the particular ſtructure of the book made ſome undiſcerning perſons raſhly aſſent to. I have not the ſmalleſt reaſon to repent of it on account of its nature, its deſign, or its effects upon the public. If there was any miſtake, it was in point of prudence, which ſhould have directed me to avoid bringing ſuch a load of malice and reſentment upon myſelf. This has afforded me one obſervation not very honorable to human nature, viz. That the rage of enemies is always more active and more laſting than the affection of friends. It often happens, that ſome who are very much pleaſed to find one ſtand forth as a champion for their political opinions, and ready to go, as it were, to the front of the battle; when their enemies ſmarting with the wounds he has given them, traduce and vilify his character, theſe eſteemed friends often, in a great meaſure, give it up, and diſcover much ſatisfaction with themſelves, that they had acted in a wiſer and more cautious manner.

I conclude the whole, with beſeeching all who are convinced, that the preſent ſtate of the church of Scotland is ſuch as I have repreſented, to exert themſelves with zeal and activity for her preſervation and recovery. There is a wonderful, though a natural union, among all worldly men againſt the ſpirit and power of true religion, wherever it appears. I am ſorry to add, that this is one of the inſtances in which the children of this world are wiſer in their generation, than the children of light. There are many whoſe conduct ſhows them to be actuated by an equal mixture of ſloth and deſpair. They are unwilling to act with vigor, and defend themſelves, by alledging, that nothing can be done with ſucceſs. How much better would the old Roman maxim be, "Nunquam deſperandum eſt de republica?" and how much better reaſon have we to adopt it? Nothing is impoſſible to the power of God. I add, that the moſt remarkable times of the

revival of religion, in this part of the united kingdom, immediately ſucceeded times of the greateſt apoſtacy, when "truth" ſeemed to be "fallen in the ſtreet, and "equity could not enter." This was the caſe immediately before the year 1638. Corruption in doctrine, looſeneſs in practice, and ſlaviſh ſubmiſſion in politics, had overſpread the church of Scotland: and yet, in a little time, ſhe appeared in greater purity and in greater dignity than ever ſhe had done before, or perhaps than ever ſhe hath done ſince that period. Let no Chriſtian, therefore, give way to deſponding thoughts. We plead the cauſe that ſhall at laſt prevail. Religion ſhall riſe from its ruins; and its oppreſſed ſtate at preſent ſhould not only excite us to pray, but encourage us to hope for its ſpeedy revival.

THE

HISTORY

OF A

CORPORATION

OF

SERVANTS.

Discovered a few Years ago in the Interior Parts of

SOUTH AMERICA.

CONTAINING SOME VERY SURPRISING EVENTS AND EXTRA-

ORDINARY CHARACTERS.

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE Reader will find himself obliged to the Author of the following History, for the pains he hath taken to render it as entertaining, and sentimental as possible. With this view he hath entirely avoided the use of foreign names, often hard to pronounce, and when pronounced wholly without meaning. Instead of this, when he had occasion to mention particular ranks of men, offices, or customs, he chose to express them by what did most exactly correspond with them in our own country. By this means the narrative, disencumbered of definitions or circumlocutions, is rendered quite easy and intelligible.

THE HISTORY OF A CORPORATION OF SERVANTS.

INTRODUCTION.

THE ſkill of an author, like that of a merchant, lies chiefly in judging with readineſs and certainty, what kind of commodities, and in what quantity, any particular age or place is able and willing to receive. This I have, of late, made very much my ſtudy, with regard to our own age and country, and the reſult of my inquiry is as follows. There are two ſorts of ſubjects for which there is a general demand in Great Britain at this time, viz. (1.) Biography, if any thing may be ſo called that gives an account of the lives of perſons that never exiſted, but in the imagination of the authors. This is indeed, a moſt fruitful ſubject, and under the various titles of Hiſtories, Lives, Adventures, Memoirs, &c. teaches people how to live after any imaginable plan. (2.) The other is the formation of ſchemes and projects, to be carried on by ſubſcription, for the good of mankind, which

never were so favorably received as at present, the abortion or mismanagement of nine in ten of them not having in the least abated the ardor of the public. If any be of opinion, that new discoveries in the science of morals, for the support of infidelity, are as favorably received as any of these, such must be told, that they are but superficial observers, or under the prejudice of religious enthusiasm. The discoveries here pointed at, have been of late years so various, so contradictory and so short-lived, that they really raise very little curiosity. As an instance of this, the reader is desired to recollect if he can, the most extraordinary thing of the kind that ever was attempted. A great living author, David Hume, Esq. not long ago, made health, cleanliness, and broad shoulders capital virtues, and a running sore an unpardonable crime; yet was it but little taken notice of when first published, and is now almost wholly forgotten.

Therefore, an author is undoubtedly happy who hath hit upon, or happens to be furnished with a subject suited to the taste of the age. This I humbly presume to be my own case. I have had the good fortune, lately, to obtain distinct information of a most extraordinary history, which also may perhaps lay a foundation for some new scheme, or, at least, for mending and cobbling those which are now cracked and old. The only misfortune that it labors under is, that it is true; for I remember the lofty and sonorous earl of Shaftsbury, whose memory I greatly revere, tells us there is much more truth in fiction than in fact. The meaning of this is, that authors of taste and genius like himself, employing their fancy in delineating feigned characters, give ordinarily a juster view of nature than tedious relaters of what really happened.

This loss however, I trust, will be abundantly made up by the extraordinary and wonderful nature of the passages I am to relate, which, it is to be hoped, will have the effect of fiction in enlivening the imagination of the writer, and, indeed, very possibly, may be mistaken for fiction by many readers. The truth is, I hope there is a singular felicity in my subject in every respect. If the excellency of history, according to lord Shaftsbury, lies in its being

like fiction, and the excellency of fiction in its being like to real facts, according to all other men, the ſubject in hand muſt needs excel, as it partakes of both theſe characters. It will be like truth, becauſe it is true; and it will be like fiction, becauſe the ſame train of events, perhaps, never happened in any other place or nation.

To introduce myſelf to my ſubject, and inform the reader how I came by the knowledge of it, he may be pleaſed to recollect, That in the year 1741, when commodore (afterwards lord) Anſon made a voyage round the world, one of the ſhips of his ſquadron, called the Wager, was caſt away upon a deſert iſland in the South Seas. The greateſt part of the crew who were ſaved lengthened the long-boat, and made a long and dangerous voyage through the ſtreights of Magellan, to Brazil. As they were often obliged to ſwim aſhore for proviſions and water, it happened that, at one time, there were to the number of fourteen of them aſhore upon a part of the coaſt very far ſouth, near the mouth of the ſtreights. Having ſtayed all night, unfortunately next morning the wind blew ſo hard in ſhore, that only ſix of the fourteen were able to get aboard, and the veſſel was obliged to go away and leave the other eight.

It is needleſs here to inſiſt upon the various accidents they met with in this perilous ſituation. The difficulty of obtaining food, without which they muſt very ſoon have died: the mean and ſcanty proviſion with which nature will be ſuſtained, when there is no more or better to be had: the inventive faculty of man for ſupplying his wants when reduced to abſolute extremity, and a hundred other things which have been repreſented in all poſſible lights by other writers of adventures. Let it ſuffice, therefore to ſay that, in proceſs of time, four of them were killed by the inhabitants of the country, and the remaining four taken priſoners. After changing their maſters ſeveral times, they came at laſt into the hands of one who carried them a great way off to the capital of an empire, and the court of a powerful prince. There they lived many years, learned the language, and had occaſion to ſee the

manners of the country. Two of them, at laſt, acquired ſuch a degree of favor, that, in compliance with their earneſt requeſt, they were ſent to the Portugueze ſettlements, and came from thence to Great Britain.

One of theſe perſons, who was a man of tolerable education, as well as good ſenſe and comprehenſion, coming to live in my neighborhood, communicated to me what follows of this hiſtory. In general he told me the conduct and characters of men, bating ſome little differences of faſhion and modes of addreſs, which are ever changing in every country, were much like what they are among ourſelves. Court favor was precarious and changeable. Intereſt and ambition prevailed more in obtaining places of power and profit, than modeſt and peaceable merit. Cold and ſober men gathered wealth, and crept up, by ſlow but ſure ſteps, to ſtation and dignity; while the lively ſprightly fellows threw away all that they had, and ſoon became contemptible to others, and uſeleſs to themſelves. The knowledge of the world was of very little benefit; for though every claſs of men could clearly diſcern the errors that adhered to thoſe of a different rank, they could ſcarcely obſerve, and never would imitate their commendable qualities. For example, ſays he, a profuſe, diſeaſed, needy lord, would ſpeak with infinite contempt of the meanneſs of ſoul, and hardneſs of heart frequently to be found in traders and men of buſineſs, but never once thought of following their example in ſobriety, application, and regularity in the diſtribution of their time, to which they manifeſtly owed all their ſucceſs. So that upon the whole, he concluded that human nature in all ages and in all places was the ſame. A ſage remark, the reader will ſay, but I can eaſily remember to have heard it before.

There was however one claſs of men in that nation, whoſe conſtitution as a body, and many of whoſe characters and practices were of the moſt extraordinary kind, viz. the SERVANTS. Their ſtate and conduct, at the time which fell under his own obſervation, were ſo ſingular that they excited his curioſity; and induced him to in-

quire with great care into their condition, as far back as hiſtory could trace them. This is what I am now to communicate to the public, being willing that my book ſhould be buried in oblivion, or burned with diſgrace, if a ſtory can be produced equal, or even ſimilar to it, an any other age or country.

CHAP. I.

Of the original State of the Servants, and their erection into a Corporation.

IN very early times, of which there are ſtill ſome accounts handed down by tradition, the ſervants were in a ſtate not much different from what they are at preſent among us. It does not appear that ever they were ſlaves, or were treated with exceſſive rigor or ſeverity. They were trained up in ſome acquaintance with, and applied themſelves to ſuch work as they ſeemed to be fitted for by the turn of their minds, and the ſtrength or agility of their bodies. They were choſen or hired by every family as they pleaſed, made a voluntary agreement, and were employed in doing what was neceſſary of every kind. They were paid as they and the family could agree, eating of their own labours, and were cheriſhed and careſſed in proportion as they deſerved it. In caſes of remarkable neglect, diſobedience or miſbehavior they were turned away. This, indeed, happened but ſeldom, for they were in general honeſt, ſober and induſtrious. They had the intereſt of their maſters at heart, nay, ſo remarkable were ſome of them in theſe times for fidelity, that (it is reported) they ſeemed to have as much or more pleaſure in doing their work, as in receiving their wages.

But it happened, ſome ages ago, that one of their princes was ſaved from a formidable conſpiracy againſt his life and crown, juſt upon the point of execution, by the fidelity and courage of a ſervant. The prince was a man of a warm heart, and an uncommonly generous diſpoſition. Not content with bountifully rewarding his benefactor by kindneſs to himſelf and family, he conceived a deſign of perpetuating the memory of the fact, and ſhowing his gratitude by doing ſomething in favor of

the whole order or body of men. For this purpoſe, being poſſeſt of abſolute power, after conſulting upon it for ſome time, he eſtabliſhed the following regulations, not doubting that they would be highly beneficial to his ſubjects in general, as well as the ſervants in particular.

1. It was ordered that the wages of ſervants ſhould be conſiderably augmented, and fixed to a certain rate in all the king's dominions. This was evidently dictated by compaſſion. He obſerved that it was very hard and unequal, that thoſe who were conſtantly employed in labor, who promoted the intereſt of their maſters ſo much, ſhould notwithſtanding live ſo poorly; that they ſhould have nothing but the coarſeſt diet, and no more money than was barely neceſſary to purchaſe the meaneſt clothing. He uſed, when the matter was under deliberation, to reaſon thus, "For my part, I think a king ought to have "the heart of a man; I conſider the ſervants as my fel- "low creatures, and am deſirous that they ſhould taſte "ſome of thoſe pleaſures and delicacies of life, which "they contribute ſo largely to procure for the accommo- "dation of others."

He alſo obſerved, that intereſt, as well as compaſſion, dictated the ſame thing; that keeping them poor would entirely diſpirit them, and make them do their duty in the moſt careleſs and ſlothful manner, by which their maſters muſt receive manifeſt prejudice. On the other hand, a good and ſecure proviſion would give them great vigor and alacrity. He ventured to foretel, that a third part increaſe of their ſalary would increaſe their work in a far greater proportion, ſo that the public would be gainers by this ſeeming burden. Beſides that ſuch a fixed proviſion would free them from all temptation to pilfering and ſtealing, and ſo be an improvement upon their honeſty as well as activity.

Another advantage he propoſed to reap by this meaſure was increaſing the number of Servants. It was well enough remembered that, at no very diſtant period, the kingdom had ſuffered not a little from the ſcarcity of ſervants; ſo that the land lay uncultivated, and many branches of buſineſs neglected. Now it was impoſſible

to avoid seeing that this measure must increase the number of servants, by inducing them to come into the kingdom from the most distant places, as well as encouraging them to marry and propagate, and bless their country with a multitude of useful hands.

Nay, he even called in the aid of luxury to enforce his argument, alledging, that keeping the servants poor, must make them sordid and nasty, so that it would be odious to people of taste and elegance to have them about their persons, or even to see them in their houses. But by carrying the proposed design into execution, he said, he hoped to see the servants in general genteel, well dressed, well behaved, and conversable men. That this must be an advantage in particular to families in the country, who were considerably distant from one another, and, in certain seasons of the year, could have very little intercourse: nay, even that in cities and places of greater resort, it would be better, in many respects to have opportunities of conversation within doors, than to be always obliged to seek society abroad.

In short, he supposed that the regulation now established would put an entire period to all the murmurings and complaints of servants, and their desires of shifting from one family to another, which was a source of daily inconveniencies. They must be touched, says he, with a sense of gratitude for so unexpected and so happy a change in their situation, and will therefore be thoroughly content, and *never ask for more.*

2. Having the public good all along at heart, as much as the advantage of the servants, he ordered schools and places of exercises to be built, and masters appointed to train up servants and fit them for their several trusts.—There were different tracts of education chalked out for all different sorts of employments. It was particularly expected of the directors of these academies, that they would select the servants fit for every branch, and both educate and dispose of them according as their genius should intimate they were most capable. As for example, for cooks, waiting-men, and other domestic servants, and

grooms, gardeners, and laboring men of all ſorts without doors.

The advantage of this regulation, in both its parts, ſeemed very evident. Education, it was ſaid, is all in all. Education makes the man, and makes the ſervant. It will therefore prepare them for their work. They will enter upon it expert and proven, very much to the public emolument; inſtead of being aukward and unhandy for ſome time, till experience has given them facility, or, perhaps, retaining ſome meaſure of ruſticity and inactivity through their whole lives.

It ſeemed alſo a matter of great moment, that no man ſhould be ſuffered to profeſs what he could not do, but that he ſhould be confined to that only which he could beſt do. Neither was it proper that this ſhould be left to the caprice of families, or the ambition and preſumption of the ſervants themſelves. And it was never once imagined the maſters of academies would be defective in *judgment* and *impartiality* on their part.

3. The third and laſt regulation he eſtabliſhed, was ordering the ſervants to be erected by charter into a large corporation, containing many ſmaller bodies and ſocieties within it. To this corporation he gave authority over the ſeveral members of which it was compoſed, and eſtabliſhed a complete ſubordination. This was thought a piece of admirable wiſdom and policy. They were to be ſtrictly watchful over one another, and it was ſuppoſed they would get all the advantage in this ſhape, which men united in ſociety have over thoſe in a ſtate of nature.—The ſeveral claſſes and diviſions of the corporation were to try the ſufficiency of all ſervants before they were admitted, and had power to turn them off when they miſbehaved or neglected their work. That this might proceed with the greater regularity, they were every one ſecured by law in their employments. They were not left in a vague dependant ſtate: a ſervant once hired by any family could not be turned away but by an order of his fellow-ſervants, to whom all complaints of his conduct were to be made, and by whom they were to be judged.

The whole was founded upon the moſt excellent reaſons. Who ſo proper to judge of the capacity and diligence of ſervants as thoſe who are ſervants themſelves? who can be ſuppoſed ſo attentive to their conduct, or ſo jealous of their behaviour, ſince the character of particulars muſt evidently reflect either diſgrace or credit on the whole collective body?

CHAP. II.

Of the Effects produced by these Regulations.

AT firſt, and indeed for a conſiderable time after theſe regulations were eſtabliſhed, experience ſeemed to confirm the wiſdom as well as generoſity of the prince, and to diſcover their happy conſequences every day. Servants were trained up and inſtructed in every branch of buſineſs, and were very expert in their work. They underſtood the cauſe, the reaſon and the end of every thing, and could talk upon it, in a moſt intelligent and conſiſtent manner. They did every thing with much exactneſs, and had plainly a far greater air of neatneſs and elegance than formerly. The fields were dreſſed and trimmed to great perfection; the utenſils of the houſes were all brightened and put in order; the outſides of the houſes and avenues to them were all adorned in a very pretty and fanciful manner. They were not content with what was barely profitable to their maſters, but paid alſo a due regard to ſhow and appearance. Perſons who travelled were exceedingly delighted, and the proprietors were not a little proud of the change; for every houſe was like a little palace, and every country-ſeat like a little paradiſe. Thus far the ſervants ſeemed to be much upon their honor, and, from a ſenſe of gratitude to the emperor, endeavored to behave themſelves with great care and diligence; ſo that every body, as well as themſelves, ſincerely rejoiced in the change of their ſtate.

But alas! how ſhort-ſighted are human creatures? this univerſal ſatisfaction did not laſt long. It was quickly ſeen, notwithſtanding ſo good a beginning, that the regu-

lations laid down would but ill anſwer the end propoſed. The change to the worſt took its riſe from the enlargement of their wages, which yet ſeemed, at firſt, to be the chief and moſt reaſonable article of the regulations: for, after they had obtained good wages, and the beſt of food, and accommodation, ſome of them began to grow fat, and conſequently, lazy. When they were ſuddenly called, ſometimes by dozing and ſleeping they did not hear at all; and when they did hear, were very ſlow in their motions, and always ready furniſhed with an excuſe for their neglect; or, perhaps, raiſed ſome very ſtrong objections to what they were deſired to do. When they were ſent of an errand, they took a long time before they returned; and yet would poſitively ſtand to it, that it was impoſſible to return ſooner. If this was not ſatisfying, they would, in a great rage, before they delivered their meſſage, return and meaſure the ground they had traverſed, in order to determine the diſpute.

Having now more to eat and drink than formerly, they behoved to take more time to it; and ſo the hours of their work were very much diminiſhed. This ſeemed to them not only reaſonable, but neceſſary; and great diſputes aroſe upon it with the families in which they ſerved. The families in general, gave them to underſtand, that they expected greater diligence and activity, as they were now better paid than before, whereas the ſervants counted that highly ridiculous; for with them it was a fixed point, that the more liberally they were paid, they ought to do the leſs for it. It is needleſs to enlarge upon this part of the ſubject; let it ſuffice to ſay, that, in general, having now got ſo good proviſion made for them, they began not to ſerve, but to live. The delicacies of the world began to captivate their hearts, and inſtead of ſatisfying themſelves with neceſſaries, and being uſeful in their generation, they bethought themſelves of enjoying what had thus ſo luckily fallen to their ſhare.

Changes in all reſpects came on inſenſibly. It was before obſerved, that one advantage propoſed by the regulations, was the increaſe of the number of ſervants. This effect indeed did follow with a witneſs. Whereas before

the country was not overſtocked with ſervants, and families were at great pains in looking out for proper ones, now they increaſed to an almoſt incredible number. Not only was there a great confluence of ſtrangers from diſtant places, but many of the inhabitants, not inconſiderable in point of ſtation found it their intereſt to become ſervants. Now you would every where ſee them going about and ſoliciting employment, and very wonderful were the arts they ſometimes uſed to obtain it. Of theſe I ſhall ſay nothing in this preliminary part of the hiſtory, becauſe I ſhall probably have afterwards a better opportunity to introduce them.

As the ſtate of things and the way of thinking began to alter, the language and manner of ſpeaking altered alſo at the ſame time. In former times they uſed to ſpeak of getting a maſter, or being hired, or getting an employment, now they ſpake of getting into bread, of getting a ſalary, a ſettlement, or a living. I know nothing that reſembles this difference ſo much, as the difference between our way of ſpeaking in Scotland, and what is uſual in our neighbor country of England about ſervants. Here we ſpeak of a ſervant's getting into ſervice: in England they call it getting a place, and a footmen turned away, they term with the higheſt propriety, a footman out of place.

Things having once come into this ſituation, it happened with theſe ſervants as it happens with all men when once they begin to gratify their deſires: they become inordinate, exceſſive and inſatiable. Inſtead of being content with what they had obtained, they began to fall upon all imaginable methods of increaſing their revenues. They contrived an infinite number of perquiſites beſides their ordinary wages. When a family had of their own free motion beſtowed any mark of favor upon a good ſervant, the thing was immediately ſpread abroad, and all other families were harraſſed with complaints, and teazed to death by their ſervants till the ſame was beſtowed upon them. They would often, in a clandeſtine manner, lay hold of ſome of the goods of the family, and appropriate them to their own uſe; and, when it came at laſt to be diſcovered, they would take the advantage of their own covetouſneſs,

and prove clearly, that by immemorial cuſtom it belonged to them as their due. Where families were ignorant, they would affirm with the greateſt boldneſs, that ſuch and ſuch were the privileges of ſervants in all other places, and by that means procure their conſent. When they were not only ignorant, but timid and cowardly, they would go a ſhort way to work, and threaten to burn their houſes to the ground if they did not comply with every demand.

But, what they excelled moſt in were the arts of flattery and deceit in rich families. Such as got near great men, would ſtand as it were in perpetual admiration of the beauty of their perſons, the gracefulneſs of their manners, and the excellence of their underſtandings. The ſervants of ſome perſons of great rank, had a cuſtom of making up a long liſt every day, of the virtues which ſuch perſons had that day put in practice, and reading it over to them next morning before they got out of bed, which was obſerved to render them quite facile and tractable for a long time after.

They perſuaded the credulous, that the public good was inſeparably connected with their thriving and opulence. 'Induſtry,' ſaid they, 'is the ſource of wealth to a nation. Servants, every body muſt acknowledge, are the 'means of induſtry: thence it follows undeniably, that 'the more ſervants the better.' By the help of this argument they obtained, that many new eſtabliſhments were made for ſervants. And ſuch was the faſcination that prevailed, that frequently there were ſettlements made for the proviſion of menial ſervants in a wilderneſs, where there was hardly a ſingle creature to ſerve; and of huſbandmen upon a ſea ſhore, where there was not an inch of ground to cultivate. They alſo got about ſick and dying perſons, and by their officious ſervices, by tending them with apparent care, and by frequently and readily giving them cordials, they prevailed, that many left great legacies to them in their wills.

CHAP. III.

Continues the same Subject. And particularly gives an account of a very remarkable step taken by the Servants.

WHEN their poſſeſſions, privileges and immunities were thus enlarged, they began to claim greater reſpect than formerly, and to aſſume additional titles and deſignations. Some of them would be no longer ſervants properly ſpeaking, but overſeers. They affirmed that it was eſſential to the nature of ſervants, that ſome of them ſhould be overſeers, and that there could be neither order nor œconomy in a family without ſome ſuch. To this they added ſub-overſeers, and ſeveral other officers for their aſſiſtance. They then proceeded to arch-overſeers, who had all the other overſeers, as well as ſervants, under their juriſdiction. At a great meeting of the whole corporation, this was determined and decreed to be, and to have been, a part of the original inſtitution of ſervitude, without which it could not poſſibly ſubſiſt.

Theſe encroachments were very patiently ſubmitted to, and, one would think, had been carried as far as the nature of the thing would admit. Yet there remained one ſtep more which exceeded every thing that had been formerly ſeen, and happened as follows. An overſeer of the capital city gathered a great many of his cotemporaries about him, and after begging their moſt ſerious attention to a propoſal he had to lay before them, made a ſpeech to the following purpoſe. 'Honored and very dear Brethren, 'You know that the life of ſociety is order, and the ſoul 'of order is ſubordination. The greateſt ſervice, there-'fore, that we can do to our corporation, is to keep up 'the ſubordination of officers among us with as much 'ſtrictneſs, and to make it as compleat and extenſive as 'poſſible. There are no ſtructures which ſtand ſo ſecure-'ly, as thoſe that are built in the form of a cone or a py-'ramid, becauſe they have a broad baſe, and gradually 'leſſen towards the top. Neither of theſe, however, is 'compleat, but maimed or imperfect, unleſs it be carried

'on till it terminate in a point. Therefore, the subordi-
'nation of our society can never be entire and perfect,
'till it end in a single person, who may unite the whole,
'and enjoy absolute uncontrolable dominion. And, as
'the person who is on the top of a pyramid, must neces-
'rily see farther than those who stand upon any of the
'lower steps of it, so the person who is at the head of the
'whole society of servants must, in virtue of his office, sur-
'pass them all in wisdom and sagacity. Nay, as this or-
'der is of the institution of nature, and as a last resort or
'supreme judge is necessary to determine controversies in
'any society, so I do think it may be proved, that nature,
'to be uniform and consistent in her operations, must im-
'mediately inspire the person so exalted, with infallible
'knowledge, and a sort of infinite mind. Now, I hope
'it is very plain, that I myself am the person to whom,
'and to my successors in office, this power and authority
'do of right belong.'

One of the assembly then rises up and says, 'I greatly
'suspect this will be attended with no good effects upon
'the interest of the servants in general, not to mention
'the interest of the families, which, from a sense of duty
'to the corporation, I entirely give up. At any rate, it
'ought not to be gone into precipitately; for it is a pro-
'digious innovation.' 'Quite otherwise,' says the former speaker; 'for though I have condescended to reason with
'you, and show you, that in the nature of things, there
'must be one who, like the top stone of a pyramid, is in-
'cumbent on the whole body; as also, that this can be no
'other than myself, who dwell in the centre of this vast
'empire; yet I can give undeniable evidence, that it hath
'been always so in fact, since there was an empire here,
'and since there were servants.' The objector then shook his head, as who should say that is far from being a clear point, and seemed to wonder from whence this evidence was to proceed. The other immediately goes on, 'It is
'as clear as the sun; for though all the records that con-
'tained this regulation are lost, yet I very well remember,
'that my nurse told me before I was two years of age,
'that her grandmother's sister's cousin-german assured her
'it was fact.'

However unwilling, one would think, men ſhould be to give up their natural rights, and ſubmit to uſurped authority, yet ſo it was that they ſoon agreed to this ſcheme; and, indeed, it appeared to have been not ill projected for their own ends. It is not to be conceived at how ſpeedy a pace they advanced, in acquiring and extending their dominion. They quite inverted the uſe of language; for when they ſpoke of the family they always meant the ſervants; or, if they ſaid any thing would tend to the good of the family, it was to be underſtood, that it would promote the increaſe of the wages, privileges and immunities of the ſervants. In many places the ſervants grew upon the families, and turned them out altogether. In ſome of the moſt delicious ſpots of the country, you would have ſeen fine ſeats and incloſures wholly poſſeſſed by ſervants, who abſolutely refuſed to do any work, but gave themſelves up to lazy contemplation. If any body had preſumed to aſk them the meaning of this, they ſaid they were employed in ſtudying the theory of ſervice, and wiſhing that all ſervants might be good, and all families well ſupplied.

It has been obſerved above, that they began their ſcheme by flattering the rich and great men, and endeavoring to inſinuate themſelves into their favor. But as ſoon as their power was ſufficiently eſtabliſhed, they changed their note, and treated the moſt conſiderable men of the country with great haughtineſs and contempt. They affirmed it to be abſolutely neceſſary for the public good, that they ſhould have much honor and reſpect paid them. That, as they were undeniably the moſt uſeful rank of men, by conſequence they were the moſt honorable. Inſtead of being humble and ſubmiſſive, they inſiſted, that all the people, from the higheſt to the loweſt, ſhould pay a profound reſpect to the overſeers, arch-overſeers, and other dignitaries, whoſe names I have forgot, becauſe they had neither ſenſe nor meaning. Nay, the emperor of the ſervants arrived in time at ſuch power, that he made the richeſt men in the country, even the governors of provinces to tremble. He ordered them ſometimes to wipe his ſhoes; and, when they miſbehaved or ſhowed the leaſt backwardneſs, commanded them to be whipt.

When my informer mentioned this circumſtance, I could not help diſcovering much amazement at the puſillanimity of theſe people, and even modeſtly hinted ſome ſuſpicion as to the truth of the fact. He inſiſted, however, in the moſt poſitive manner, on the truth of his account, and added, that he had many things ſtill more wonderful to communicate; as an inſtance of which he affirmed, that it was not only uſual for the emperor to order great men to be whipt, but even to command them to whip themſelves. All this they were obliged to ſubmit to, for he had the lower ſervants, and the whole kingdom abſolutely under his influence. If any perſon or family had diſputed his will in the leaſt article, they would either, without more ado, burn the houſe and them in it, or they would wholly give over work, and neither provide them with food nor fuel, ſo that they behoved immediately to ſtarve.

What contributed not a little to eſtabliſh this uſurpation, was a very ſingular ſcheme which they fell upon while they were flattering great men, and perſuading them to make new eſtabliſhments for ſervants. This was, that families ſhould not be permitted to chooſe ſervants for themſelves, but that a lord, or any other great man, ſhould have the power of nominating the ſervants within a certain diſtrict. They never failed to invent plauſible reaſons for all their ſchemes. In ſupport of this it was alledged, that families were often whimſical in their choice. That ſome would prefer a ſervant becauſe he was tall, and others becauſe he was ſhort; ſome becauſe his hair was red, others becauſe it was black. That they did not know when they were well ſerved, and when they were not. That they were apt to be impoſed on by ſuch as had ſmooth tongues and could flatter them. That, if families and ſervants were in a good underſtanding, they would raiſe ſedition and ſubvert the conſtitution.

On the other hand it was thought exceeding clear, that great men would underſtand the intereſt of the country, and the capacity of ſervants, much better than the vulgar. As alſo, that they were above all ſuſpicion of partiality, and would be ſure always to ſend fit and accompliſhed

ſervants to every houſe. But alas, the contrary of all this was ſoon found by experience. They learned ſpeedily to ſell every place to the higheſt bidder, unleſs when they had a favorite or dependant to gratify, which indeed, at bottom, was the ſame thing. However, they were ſoon made dupes to the ſervants, for when the profit of this ſale was found out, the overſeers and arch-overſeers gradually uſurped the nomination to themſelves, and at laſt, it came to be made an addition to the great and overgrown power of the emperor.

It may eaſily be ſuppoſed, things were now in a ſad ſituation, and they continued ſo, as tradition and written records aſſure us, for many ages. The lands lay uncultivated; the people were reduced to the greateſt miſery imaginable; they were ſorrily clothed, and worſe fed. No body proſpered but the ſervants, or rather, only the upper ranks of them, the noble and honorable ſervants, the overſeers and arch-overſeers. To theſe indeed may be added the idle and ſpeculative ſort, who were ſettled in hives, in the moſt pleaſant and fruitful vallies, in every province. As for the poorer or loweſt claſs of ſervants, who actually did any work for the families, they were as much oppreſſed, by this time, as their maſters. Their wages were moſtly taken up by lazy overſeers, or exhauſted by heavy taxes which they were obliged to pay to the emperor, and his court.

CHAP. IV.

A terrible Blow given to the Domination of the Servants; and particularly to the Power of the Emperor.

IT appears to be a fact, though not very well accounted for by philoſophers, that, when men have been long accuſtomed to ſlavery, they hug their chains, and become ſo blinded, as to pride themſelves in their miſery itſelf. A poor peaſant, in a neighboring country, whoſe face is pale with hunger, and his family ſcarce covered with rags, through the oppreſſion of his prince, yet will be very ready

to venture his life in vindication of the tyrant's honor, and count himself extremely happy to lay it down in defence of his person. So it happened with the people under consideration. They were so deluded by these servants, that, as their condition, so their reason itself was turned upside down. They gloried in the usurpation of the servants over them, worshipped them often as they passed, and stoutly defended all their rights and privileges.

If by chance it happened, (as there were always some in every age) that one thought fit to complain of the sloth, debauchery, avarice and tyranny of the servants, his brethren immediately raised a hideous accusation against him, and the stupid people generally joined in the cry. They immediately assisted his fellow-servants to seize him, to imprison him, and, according to the degree of his offence, to punish him. They first, indeed, took the most charitable pains to convince him of his error. If, upon this, he was willing to recant, and solemnly to declare that the conduct of the servants was admirable, and the character of them all unblameable, he was dismissed only with a good beating. But, if he was obstinate, and insisted on telling the truth, he was carried to a dreadful subterraneous place, and there put to the most horrid and shocking tortures, which at length ended in death.

However, at last, this mystery of iniquity got a terrible blow. One of the lower servants, of an honest heart, and a determined resolute temper, being filled with indignation at the oppression which the rest were guilty of, set himself to open the eyes of the public, and expose their wickedness. He made a full discovery of all the frauds he had any how been acquainted with, and spared not the corruption of the emperor's court. Laying down only this plain principle, that servants were obliged to promote, at all times, the real interest of their masters, he set the abominable conduct of the covetous blood-suckers in the most odious light. Whenever he went to a fair, or other place of public concourse, he would get upon an eminence, and, in a long discourse, endeavor to rouse the people from their lethargy, and inflame them with resentment against their oppressors.

This furniſhed his brethren with an opportunity of repreſenting him as a diſturber of the peace, and loading him with innumerable calumnies. Many tumults were raiſed againſt him, and he was often in imminent danger of his life. When he had narrowly eſcaped being ſtoned in public, they would often hire deſperadoes to aſſaſſinate him in private; and, ſometimes, attempted to bribe his intimate friends to take him off by poiſon. However, by a mixture of bravery and caution in himſelf, together with the aſſiſtance of ſome faithful friends, who ſaw how much he was promoting their intereſt, or rather, by a moſt ſingular providence, he was always brought off ſafe. At laſt, a few of the other ſervants joined him, and they together opened the eyes of ſeveral provinces of the empire. Theſe came to a formal reſolution of caſting off the yoke of the emperor, and ſettling the ſervants upon a quite new, or rather bringing them back to the old, reaſonable and natural foundation.

This was not brought about without a moſt violent and pertinacious oppoſition. The emperor immediately ſounded the alarm, and ſet the ſervants in motion throughout all his dominions. He could not be ſuppoſed, indeed, to look upon ſuch a ſcheme with indifference; for it plainly tended to ſtrip him of a great part of his revenue and power: nor was it eaſy to ſee where it would ſtop. He therefore cried out againſt it with all his might. He ſent out a proclamation, in which he affirmed, that it ſtruck againſt the very being of ſervants, and that the deſign was no leſs than to exterminate them from the face of the earth. He repreſented it as the moſt unnatural thing that ever was heard of. That there had been ſometimes conſpiracies of ſervants againſt their maſters, but a joint conſpiracy of maſters againſt their own ſervants, and of ſervants againſt their fellow-ſervants, was abſolutely without precedent. He concluded with a ſolemn execration, devoting all who ſhould continue in this rebellion to complete and irretrievable ruin.

The conſequence of this was a civil war in the kingdom. Many battles were fought, in which there was a dreadful ſlaughter on both ſides, and multitudes taken

priſoners, who were none of them uſed very well. The emperor indeed, and his court had a manifeſt advantage, by long practice, in deviſing the moſt exquiſite methods of revenge and cruelty. But, to ſhorten my narrative, after many violent and bloody diſputes, as well as uſeleſs conferences, at laſt ſome provinces agreed to keep the old way, and ſome eſtabliſhed the new. Particularly, in one Northern province there was at the time of the change, a moſt excellent method and order eſtabliſhed with regard to the ſervants. They not only renounced the authority of the emperor; but all overſeers, arch-overſeers, auditors, controllers, accountants, keepers of records, and other unneceſſary officers were baniſhed at once: and none ſuffered to continue but uſeful working ſervants. The ſpeculative drones were expelled, and their lands given to perſons of rank and worth in the province. That regulation was aboliſhed, as extremely pernicious, which permitted lords or great men to name ſervants to others, ſo that every family choſe ſuch as beſt pleaſed themſelves, and ſuch as were well qualified for the buſineſs for which they were hired. The exorbitant increaſe of their wages was reduced, as well as all extravagant perquiſites, and only a moderate proviſion continued and ſettled.

CHAP. V.

Some account of the Reformed Establishment, in a Northern Province; and the happy effects that followed upon it for a time. It begins however again to degenerate.

THE people of this province were now ſo fully convinced of the terrible conſequences of the late uſurpation, that they reſolved to uſe all poſſible precautions, to prevent the return of corruption for the future. In this the ſervants themſelves ſeemed to concur very heartily, and were, apparently, animated with a warm zeal againſt the worthleſs part of their own order. Many excellent rules were laid down in the meetings of the corporation. They were ordered under the ſevereſt pe-

nalties to apply themſelves diligently to their buſineſs; to live ſober, grave and mortified lives; to forbear all ranting, junketing and gaming. They were forbid all travelling abroad, or wandering from their families, but upon urgent occaſions, and with leave aſked and given. If any were convicted of diſhoneſty, lazineſs, or diſobedience, they were not only diſmiſſed, but ſtript of their clothes, branded in their foreheads, and declared utterly incapable of ever being again employed.

The greateſt ſtrictneſs imaginable was uſed in trying them, as to their ſufficiency in every branch of buſineſs for which they were hired; and very diligent inquiry made into their character for honeſty and ſincerity. When they were introduced to any family, they were ſolemnly bound by a tremendous oath, to have the good of the family always at heart, and that they ſhould never do any thing, directly or indirectly, that might tend to its prejudice. But above all, there was a ſtrict law made, and declared to be unalterable, that no ſervant ſhould be forced upon any family againſt their will. In order to ſecure, in the moſt effectual manner, the execution of theſe laws, it was reſolved, that, in the government of the corporation, there ſhould be joined with the ſervants certain perſons of the moſt prudent ſort from the families. Theſe were called helpers, they had no ſalaries, but being naturally a ſort of repreſentatives of the people, it was expected they would univerſally ſupport their intereſt.

For a long time this province was exceeding happy in their reformed conſtitution. The moſt perfect harmony ſubſiſted between maſters and ſervants. The work of the ſervants ſeemed to be a pleaſure to them, and, on the other hand, the members of every family ſeemed to vie with one another who ſhould treat their ſervants with the greateſt tenderneſs and humanity. Once or twice there was an attempt made to introduce overſeers and arch-overſeers among them, from a neighbouring province which had retained theſe officers, though they would not ſuffer them to be ſubject to the emperor. However, the people ſhowing a proper ſpirit, they were ſtill thrown out. All this time matters went on exceedingly well, the fields were

aſſiduouſly cultivated, and brought every year immenſe crops; and plenty as well as harmony was every where to be ſeen.

But alas, after a long ſeaſon of peace and quiet, things began to alter for the worſe. Ambition, avarice and luxury, would not be kept out by the baniſhment of the old titles. They found a way of introducing themſelves, under cover of the form that then prevailed, without any apparent change. The moſt important ſtep towards bringing this about, was re-eſtabliſhing the law which empowered great men to nominate ſervants to inferior families. This was ſubmitted to the more eaſily, becauſe they only nominated them to the ſalary, provided that the corporation ſhould think proper to introduce them to the family. For this purpoſe, the moſt ſacred laws required an invitation from the family itſelf. But the young ſervants ſoon began to find, that it was far eaſier for many of them to play the paraſite or ſycophant about great men's houſes, that they might procure a writ of nomination, than to acquire a good reputation for diligence in their work. That was the road, therefore, in which the greateſt part of them travelled to preferment.

Many and fierce were the ſtruggles, for ſeveral years, in the meetings of the corporation about introducing ſervants to families. As all the laws required an invitation from the family, when any perſon was nominated, a neighbouring court would ſend a deputation to the family, to aſk them whether they would take ſuch a one for their ſervant or not. Sometimes they wheedled and flattered, and ſometimes threatened them, if they would not comply. If any conſented, their names were ſet down three or four times, to ſwell the number; if any were angry and ſpoke impertinently, they were ſuppoſed to be out of their ſenſes, and incapable of judging. After theſe arts were uſed they would ſit down gravely to determine the matter, and *find*, that there was in this inſtance a moſt agreeable and harmonious invitation.

It is impoſſible to help ſmiling, when one reflects upon the various methods uſed in conducting this buſineſs.—Sometimes they could not get a ſingle perſon in a houſe

to accept of the ſervant who had been nominated. When this happened, they uſed to ſend for all the relations of the family, even the moſt diſtant couſins, and aſk their conſent, which was eaſily obtained, becauſe it was nothing to them whether the family were well ſerved or ill.—When they had obtained it, if a complaint was made, they endeavored to prove, by very ingenious reaſonings, that theſe diſtant relations had as good a title to invite a ſervant as any perſon whatever. Matters however drove on very heavily for a while; but in order to facilitate them, many gentlemen of eſtates, who knew not much either about ſervice or ſervants, procured themſelves to be choſen to the office of helpers. Not that they helped to do any thing: but, getting in to be members of the courts of the corporation, they contributed to provide ſervants in places. By this means many were provided with a piece of bread, who had been poor ſneaking fellows, and had followed them in their youth, in hunting, fiſhing, and other diverſions.

Such was the ſituation of affairs when my informer went into the country, and, as the caſe was very ſingular, the reader may eaſily gueſs how much it engaged his attention. He reſided chiefly in this Nothern province, and, therefore, his remarks were moſtly confined to what happened among them. It would be endleſs to mention all that he told me, but the principal obſervations ſhall be communicated to the world in the following chapters.

CHAP VI.

Of the great impropriety often seen in the appointment of ſervants; and the ſentiments of the inhabitants on that ſubject.

THERE is commonly, in every ſociety, ſome radical principle which governs and modifies the reſt, and gives a tincture to all the meaſures that are carried on, whatever be their particular ſubject, or ſeeming intention. In the caſe before us, the fundamental error appears to have been the power of nomination which was given to

great men. The consequence of this was, an excessive impropriety in the appointment of servants to different families. If a poor ordinary family wanted a household servant, sometimes a lord would send them a foreign cook out of his own kitchen. This fellow would speak such minced broken language, that they could not understand him; and the meat he dressed for them they could not endure to look upon. When they desired him to provide plain solid food, such as they had been in use to eat, and in sufficient quantity to fill their bellies, he would serve them up a course of flimsy dishes, finely garnished, but entirely disguised, so that the poor people could not imagine what they contained. If at any time they made complaint of this, he triumphed over their clownish ignorance and unrefined taste, and would offer to prove to the satisfaction of all men of sense, that he perfectly understood his art.

In innumerable such instances they went entirely in the face of common sense, in the choice and appointment of servants. Sometimes, if a family wanted a plowman or a gardiner, they would send them a huntsman, or a running footman. If a considerable merchant wanted a bookkeeper, they would find him a stupid ignorant fellow who could neither write nor read. For this preposterous conduct there was no remedy. The great men counted the right of nomination as a precious jewel, which no consideration could induce them to part with. And as the power of determination, in all disputed cases, lay in courts composed of servants, they strenuously supported the most unreasonable appointments. This was naturally to be expected, because a contrary conduct would have been a silent impeachment of many of themselves, as unfit for their present stations.

Besides, it happened in this case, as I observed had happened in a former age, many loved to have it so. The people of better rank, and those who would be thought to be of better rank, by an unaccountable fascination, not only approved, but admired these measures. To allow families, they said, to choose servants for themselves, would be a source of endless confusion, but that the present was

plainly a ſimple, rational, uniform and peaceable method of proceeding. It was a common and a faſhionable topic of converſation, to deſpiſe the folly and impudence of the common people, who had always a ſtrong inclination to chooſe their own ſervants, and looked with a very evil eye upon thoſe who were thus billeted upon them againſt their wills. If any perſon, in a company, had but ſignified that he thought this conduct inconſiſtent with equity or good policy, he was not thought fit to be reaſoned with, but a great and loud laugh was immediately raiſed againſt him, ſo that he was not only put to ſilence, but to confuſion. Nay, there were not wanting many who affirmed, that no body could be ſincerely of that opinion, but that it was only pretended, from baſe and ſiniſter views.

I muſt obſerve here, that when my informer was on this part of the ſubject, which indeed he often reſumed, as what had made a great impreſſion upon his own mind, I could not help again diſcovering marks of aſtoniſhment. I told him, I very well knew the abſurdities of which the human mind is capable, yet this ſeemed to be the moſt incredible of any thing that I had ever read or heard of; that it ſhould be laughed down as a ridiculous notion, that families ought to be at liberty to chooſe their own ſervants. On this he was not a little offended, and ſpeaking with ſome acrimony, ſays, 'It was to gratify your curioſity, 'Sir, that, in this and former converſations, I have given 'an account of my obſervations in foreign countries. If 'you deſire to hear no more, I ſhall be wholly ſilent; but 'give me leave to ſay, that the treatment which we tra-'vellers meet with when we return home, is at once un-'reaſonable and ungrateful. If we tell you things that 'are common, you look upon them as inſipid and trifling; 'and, if we tell you things that are quite new and ſurpri-'ſing, you let us know with great good manners, that you 'do not believe us.'

Then after a little pauſe, 'Pray Sir,' ſays he, 'how ma-'ny nations are there in Europe, Aſia or Africa, who 'think themſelves at liberty to chooſe their own prince, 'or to bring him to an account for oppreſſion or bad go-'vernment.' Truly, ſaid I, I believe not above five

or fix. 'Well then,' says he, 'if, perhaps, fifty to one of 'mankind, have thought it a sin or folly for them to choose 'their own masters, is it modest in you to suspect my ve- 'racity, when I tell you of one nation, where it became 'fashionable to think that they ought not to choose their 'own servants.'

'But to come a little closer to the point,' says he, 'are 'you not a member of the select society in E———h?' I am, and glory in it as a most honorable distinction. 'Have you not taken agriculture under your patronage?' Undoubtedly; and by what means can we better promote the interest of the public? 'By none, I admit. But suf- 'fer me to proceed with my interrogatories. Have you 'bought any land with the profits of your improvements?' Not yet. They are but in their infancy, and have cost me a great deal of expence. 'Are the crops of impro- 'vers generally better than those of other people?' I can- not say they are. 'You ought,' says he, 'to have confes- 'sed that they are commonly worse; for, according to my 'observation, the mark of an improver is not to have a 'good crop, but to be able to give a rational and philoso- 'phical account how he came to have a bad one. But 'have you not also encouraged a man to write books, and 'read lectures upon agriculture, who made himself a beg- 'gar by putting it in practice?' Perhaps it may be so, but he understood the theory. 'How came you to believe 'that he understood the theory? Alas! alas! sir, absur- 'dities coming into fashion is not so rare a thing at home, 'as to entitle you to doubt the truth of my narrative, 'when I told you of the mistakes and delusions of a cer- 'tain people abroad.'

I confess I was never more nettled at any thing, than at this unexpected attack upon the laudable attempts among us, of late, to improve our native country. To compare them with the monstrous conduct of the unpolish- ed American people described in this book, was unsuffera- ble. I could not, therefore, let the matter drop, but told him, all that you have said, sir, might easily be answered; however, not to spend time upon it at present, what do you think of, or what have you to say against the excellent and

rational tracts which have been publiſhed by private gentlemen of fortune among us, upon agriculture? Do they not contain the cleareſt arithmetical calculations, of the profit to ariſe from the method laid down? 'I ſay,' anſwered he, 'they are all what the lawyers call *felo de se*, 'and totally inadmiſſible.' Your reaſon, pray. 'My 'reaſon! why, truly, I have more reaſons than one. In 'the firſt place, they always put me in mind of a quack 'doctor with his *catholicon*. They have but one remedy 'for all diſeaſes. A gentleman happens to be ſtruck with 'ſome new theoretical principle, and immediately falls to 'work, runs down every thing elſe, and applies this wonderful diſcovery to all purpoſes, all ſoils, and all ſeaſons. 'You know what enthuſiaſts the horſe hoers and pulveriſers are. Many of them are clearly of opinion, that 'dung is prejudicial to ground, as ſerving only to engender weeds. I was once quite of this opinion myſelf, 'and found no other difficulty in it, than how gentlemen 'and farmers would get quit of their dung, which, not 'being returned to the ground in the way of manure, 'muſt ſoon grow up to an enormous, and at the ſame time, 'moſt nauſeous and offenſive heap. When under theſe 'apprehenſions, I remember to have projected a ſcheme 'to be carried on by ſubſcription, which would have proved an effectual remedy. The method was to have 'plans taken of every country, in which the level ſhould 'be marked, then canals to be carried through all the low 'grounds, and ſmaller ducts drawn from every gentleman 'and farmer's houſe, terminating in theſe canals, which, 'by the help of a collection of rain water at every houſe, 'would, at certain ſeaſons of the year, carry away the 'whole dung, and at laſt empty it into the ſea. The expence of this ſcheme would, indeed, have been very 'conſiderable; but the great advantages to be reaped from 'it, I apprehended, would ſoon convince every body of 'its utility. Now, however ridiculous ſuch a ſcheme 'may be, I am fully convinced it would have been put in 'practice in a certain county, if it had not been for the 'incorrigible obſtinacy of the common people. I am alſo 'of opinion, that it would have ſucceeded, and that dung

'would have been wholly baniſhed in a ſhort time. This 'would have happened, not only by the help of the canals,' 'but the crops would have been ſo thin and ſpiritual, 'that the cattle who fed upon them would have paſſed ve- 'ry little of a groſs or excremental nature.

'I ſhall not trouble you, continued he, at this time, 'with any more of my reaſons but one. It ſeems 'highly incredible that, if the new ſchemes of agriculture 'were ſo profitable as their authors give out, they would 'be ſo generous as to diſcover them gratis to the public, 'and even preſs the ſaid public to accept of them. It is 'more probable they would keep them as a ſecret in their 'own families, till their excellence were diſcovered by 'their viſible effects. I know a manufacturing town, 'where, if any man falls upon a method of working, or a 'fabric of goods, that is likely to bring a good profit, he 'is ſo far from preſſing it upon his neighbours, that he uſes 'every poſſible precaution to keep it to himſelf. On the 'other hand, his neighbours are as inquiſitive as he is ſe- 'cret: and commonly both diſcover and imitate it in a 'very little time. There is a diſpoſition in mankind to 'reſiſt what is forced upon them, and to leave no method 'uneſſayed to come at what is induſtriouſly placed out of 'their reach.

'I would, therefore, humbly recommend it to all im- 'provers, to give over talking upon the ſubject, and to 'fall heartily about putting their rules in practice; and, I 'can promiſe them, that, if they be ſucceſsful, it will 'not be long before they will be quite common. Or, let 'every perſon who diſcovers a noſtrum in agriculture, ap- 'ply to the government for a patent that no body may be 'ſuffered to uſe it except himſelf, and thoſe who ſhall pay 'him ſufficiently for the ingenuity of his invention. I 'can aſſure you, ſir, that if I had ſaid to the people whom 'I left a few years ago, that I knew a nation, where it 'was common for benevolent perſons to point out to them 'plain, eaſy, cheap and certain methods of growing rich, 'but they would not be perſuaded to uſe them, I would 'have had the ſame compliment paid me, which you were 'pleaſed to pay me ſome time ago, that I was taking the 'privilege of a traveller.'

I ſhall not trouble the reader with ſaying how far I was convinced by this reaſoning, only it made me reſolve to be entirely ſilent, as to any further particulars I ſhould learn concerning the corporation of ſervants, how ſtrange and unaccountable ſoever they might be. Having therefore, brought this unavoidable digreſſion to a cloſe, we proceed with the hiſtory.

CHAP. VII.

Great partiality in the trial of Servants, and uncertainty in the characters given of them.

IF the reader recollects what was ſaid in the preceding chapter, it is probable he will be ſurpriſed, that the corporation, with the powers given them, did not, for their own credit, look better into the qualifications of ſervants. Since it was in their power to licenſe them or not, it may be ſuppoſed they would take effectual care, that no inſufficient perſon ſhould be admitted. But it is to be obſerved, that ſo ſoon as the method of fixing ſervants, upon the nomination of lords or great men, came to be again in uſe, the trial of their ſufficiency turned to a mere farce. There might be ſome degree of integrity found in one court; but, in ſuch a caſe, the candidate had nothing to do but apply to another, where he would find, perhaps, a ſet of raſcally fellows who were aſhamed of nothing. To what a degree of boldneſs they ventured to proceed, may be ſeen from the following account of what literally happened.

A certain court was going upon the examination of a young man, who deſired to have a certificate that he was fully accompliſhed as a ſervant, and particularly well ſkilled in the cultivation of land. A grave and ancient member aſked him, Pray, ſir, what is the beſt way of plowing hard ſtiff land? *Anſ.* By running a wheel-barrow over it. The examinator was highly offended with the abſurdity of the anſwer, and ſhowed plainly in his countenance a mixture of ſurprize and indignation. But

another member of court, being of a meek and gentle temper, and a great enemy to ſeverity, thought proper to interpoſe. He ſays to his brother, My dear ſir, the young man is modeſt and baſhful, which in itſelf is a moſt amiably diſpoſition, though it hinders him from anſwering ſo diſtinctly, as were to be wiſhed. Then, turning to the candidate, he ſays, I dare ſay, ſir, you know well enough that a wheel-barrow cannot plough land, becauſe it will not enter into the ſoil, nor open it ſufficiently. Muſt not hard ſtiff land be broken and pulveriſed, in order to make it fruitful? *Ans.* Yes, ſir.

Then the firſt reſumed his examination. Now, pray ſir, Can you tell me how deep land ought to be ploughed when it is well done? He, though quite ignorant of the ſubject, being naturally a man of mettle and acuteneſs, imagined, from what he had heard, that the deeper the better, and immediately anſwered, ſix yards. On this his examinator fell into a violent paſſion, and ſaid, How have you the impudence, ſir, to aſk us to inſtal you as a ploughman when you know nothing of the matter? Was there ever ſuch a thing heard or ſeen, ſince the beginning of the world, as ploughing land ſix yards deep? or what conception could you have, in your own mind, of the poſſibility of the thing? You ought to have a ſentence paſſed againſt you, wholly incapacitating you for any place in this country.

The noble and generous ſpirit of the candidate was rouſed by this ſevere treatment; ſo, he replied, Pray ſir, do you imagine that, in this improved age, the ſervants of the eſtabliſhed corporation are brought up to a thorough knowledge of the ſeveral branches of buſineſs, for which the ſalaries are appointed? For my own particular part, you ought not to be ſurpriſed that I could not tell you how land ſhould be ploughed, for I never ſaw a plough in my life. How, when, where and by whom were you educated then? ſays the other in amaze. *Ans.* I ſerved an apprenticeſhip in a toy-ſhop. Very well, ſays the examinator, bleſſed, precious, happy, improved times? I have no more to add, I give up the examination to any body that pleaſes.

When this diſcontented zealot had dropt the diſcourſe, ſome other moderate man aſked him a few polite and faſhionable queſtions, ſuch as, what is the genteeleſt lining for a read coat? in what manner ſhould you preſent a glaſs of wine to a lord, and how to a farmer? whether is hunting or fiſhing the pleaſanteſt diverſion? whether ſhould the ſervants or the children of a family have the beſt lodging, diet, &c.? After a few minutes had been ſpent in this manner, it was carried by a great majority that he had anſwered extremely well, and was, in every reſpect, a moſt accompliſhed ſervant.

It was uſual for the ſervants to carry certificates with them, from the inferior courts of the corporation, wherever they went; but if any man had truſted to theſe certificates, he would have found himſelf miſerably miſtaken. They had taken up a principle, that a man might atteſt any thing to be true, which he did not know to be falſe. On this principle, for a proper conſideration, a vagrant fellow, of whom they knew little or nothing, would eaſily obtain a certificate, declaring him to be a compleat ſervant for every branch of buſineſs, and in particular, an admirable cook, gardiner, or whatever elſe he himſelf deſired to be ſpecified. If, upon trial, he was found totally deficient in any of the branches mentioned, and complaint was made to the court who certified for him, they thought they were fully excuſed if they could ſay that, upon their honor they knew nothing about him, and were wholly ignorant whether he was a good ſervant or a bad. On all ſuch occaſions they uſed to launch out in praiſe of charity, and alledge, that every man had a right to another's good word, as far as it would go, unleſs he had forfeited it by ſome particular and known miſdemeanor.

CHAP. VIII.

Servants of different characters. A sketch of the good and bad. The inveterate hatred of the bad against the good.

HOWEVER general the corruption was, the reader is not to imagine that all ſervants were of the ſame character, or behaved in the ſame manner. There were ſtill ſome, here and there, who acted in a manner ſuitable to their ſtation, who minded their buſineſs, who loved their maſters, and were beloved by them. Theſe made as great a ſtruggle as they could to keep matters right in the meetings of the corporation, though, commonly, with very indifferent ſucceſs. The oppoſite principles and conduct of the two ſorts may be learned from the following particulars.

They differed *toto cœlo*, in their very profeſſion and manner of ſpeaking. The modern faſhionable party affirmed, that courage and ſelf-ſufficiency ought to be the leading character of a ſervant. That he ought always to be ſpeaking in praiſe of his own deeds. That he ought never to allow of any error or miſtake in his behavior; but, on the contrary, to inſiſt that he deſerved the higheſt approbation. Who is obliged, ſaid they, to ſpeak well of a man who ſpeaks ill of himſelf? can there be any thing more puſilanimous, than for a ſervant to be always confeſſing that he can do very little to any purpoſe.

On the other hand, the honeſter ſort of ſervants declared, that they thought pride and confidence were in themſelves hateful, and quite intolerable in ſervants. That they ſhould not make high pretenſions, leſt they ſhould be brought but to the greater ſhame; that they ſhould acknowledge the great imperfection of every thing they did, and expect to be rewarded, not for the worth or value of their ſervice, but from the goodneſs and indulgence of their maſters.

It was curious to obſerve the different effects of theſe principles. Thoſe who ſpoke in the higheſt terms of their own qualifications, were always the moſt negligent and the moſt unfaithful. They grudged every thing they did, and laid hold of innumerable pretences for ſhortening their hours of labor, and procuring days of relaxation. If, at any time, one of them had done a piece of work in a tolerable manner, he could hardly be brought to do any more for two days; but was wholly taken up in admiring his own ingenuity, and commending it to all who would take the pains to liſten to him. On the contrary, the humble and ſelf-denied were always buſy, applied themſelves to their duty with the utmoſt care and aſſiduity, and thought they could never do enough. They never once called in queſtion the hours of labor, but conſidered the neceſſity of the family, or the importance of the work they were engaged in. When any body happened to commend one of them for his diligence, he intreated them to forbear ſuch diſcourſe, for he was very ſenſible he had not done the thouſandth part of what he ought to have done.

Men came to be ſo ſenſible of the different effects of theſe principles, that almoſt every family earneſtly wiſhed to have ſervants of the ſelf-denying character, and perfectly hated the other. If they entered into converſation with an unknown ſervant, they were particularly attentive to the ſtrain of his diſcourſe, and, though he were upon his guard, would with great ſagacity penetrate his ſentiments. But, alas! this ſerved very little purpoſe; for, if he had intereſt to procure a writ of nomination, they were obliged to receive him, and then being fixed in the ſaddle, he made a full diſcovery both of his principles and practice.

Nothing was more remarkable than the rancorous hatred which the ſelf ſufficient bore to the humble ſervants; eſpecially ſuch as ſhowed the moſt remarkable diligence in their work. They ſpread ſlanders againſt them without number. They uſed to go about with indefatigable diligence, among the great men, and nominators to the eſtabliſhed ſalaries, to exaſperate their minds againſt them,

and prevent their ſettlement or promotion. They repreſented them as a ſet of poor, ſilly, ſneaking, ſpiritleſs fellows, who, for no other end than to throw an odium on the more free and generous livers, would work longer than uſual. For the ſame reaſon, it was pretended, that, when the reſt were at their paſtime, running jumping, or cudgel playing, then to be ſure, theſe hypocrites would be driving a ſtake, or pruning a tree about a farm, or picking weeds from a garden or field of corn. They repreſented them, alſo, (which was indeed partly true) as acquiring a ſtiff ruſtic air, by often ſtooping, and habitual application to their work.

Neither were they wanting in executing their revenge againſt their enemies themſelves, whenever an opportunity offered. If two or three of the looſer ſort met, by chance, one of the induſtrious in a ſolitary place, or going of an errand, they cunningly ſolicited him to join with them in ſome diverſion, for example, blind-man's-buff, or any other. If he complied, they all conſpired againſt him, and drubbed him heartily: and, after they had done ſo, one was immediately diſpatched to inform againſt him, and let the family he belonged to know how he had been ſpending his time, ſo that he was no better than his neighbors. Whenever they diſcovered a ſervant in a field after the uſual time of labor, they would get behind the hedges and pelt him unmercifully with ſtones, ſo that he returned home, not only fatigued with his work, but ſeverely ſmarting with the wounds he had received.

Such was not only the conduct of individuals, but the very ſame ſpirit prevailed in the meetings of the corporation, from the loweſt to the higheſt. None met with ſo ſevere treatment from them as honeſt induſtrious ſervants, who were beloved in the families where they were placed; neither was there any crime ſo heinous as being more diligent than the generality of other ſervants. If any family accuſed a ſervant of pilfering, negligence, drunkenneſs, or wantonneſs among the maids, theſe were all human infirmities, no way atrocious in their nature. They were alſo hard to be aſcertained; ſo that it was almoſt impoſſible to bring a proof of the facts to the ſatisfaction of

the court. But, if one happened to be accuſed of doing any uncommon ſervice to the family at their deſire, or working when others were allowed to play, this was high treaſon againſt the conſtitution ; and he was condemned without mercy, and ſometimes without hearing.

But, of all the crimes of this ſort, the moſt unpardonable was whatever tended to impeach the wiſdom, or weaken the authority of the annual meetings of the corporation. When an inferior court was ordered to introduce a ſervant into a family who had refuſed to receive him, ſometimes a member or two would humbly repreſent, that the terms of the oath appeared to them abſurd and profane, in that inſtance, and beg to be excuſed.—Whenever this happened, they were dragged as delinquents to the bar, rated and abuſed, ſtript and branded, declared infamous, and incapable even of repentance. It was many times affirmed in the general meeting, that no man could be guilty of a crime which, ſo much as, approached in guilt to that of diſparaging the authority of the corporation of ſervants.

I muſt take this opportunity of acquainting the reader with a ſtory that happened a few years before my informer left the country. One of the ſervants, who was a great oppoſer of the prevailing meaſures, finding his brethren to be deaf to ſerious reaſoning, fell upon a ſingular device. Being poſſeſt of a vein of humor, and knowing a little of the art of painting, he drew a picture of the droll or ludicrous kind, in which, by ænigmatical characters, he repreſented the various impoſitions of the ſervants in general. He alſo took off the likeneſſes of the principal and moſt active leaders of the corporation, and put them in the moſt comical poſtures imaginable. Here was to be ſeen a fellow capering and dancing in a garden all full of weeds, and his inſtruments lying beſide him, quite grown over with ruſt.—Another carrying a baſket over his arm, with the ſign of a pine apple in his hand, and a paſſenger, on examining the contents, finds nothing but ſtinking fiſh, and ſtops his noſe.—A great bloated fellow, ſwelled like a tun, challenging the whole country to run a race with him.—Another hurrying away a girl into a corner,

and covering her with his frock.—Theſe, and many others, he drew in ſuch a manner, as clearly to expoſe their knavery and oſtentation.

This picture was ſtuck up, in the night-time, near a public road leading to a great town. As the perſons were all very well known, it is not to be imagined what entertainment it afforded to the people. No body could look upon it without laughing: and when ever any of the ſervants, honored with a place in it, were ſeen upon the ſtreets, the boys gathered about them in crowds, and, to their unſpeakable mortification, mimicked the poſtures in which they had been repreſented. Copies in miniature were taken of this performance, and kept in many families; ſo that, whenever the ſervants were in ill humor, they would pull out the draught, and hold it in their eye.

The fury and reſentment of the ſervants, on the publication of this piece, is not to be conceived. The author had done it with ſo much caution and ſecrecy, that they could not get him legally convicted. However, they either diſcovered, or at leaſt thought they had diſcovered who he was, and employed themſelves night and day, in deviſing methods of revenge. Above all, that unlucky fellow, who had been repreſented following the girl, was ſo tranſported with rage, that he ſcarce ever returned to his right ſenſes. He had been ſomething of a draughtſman himſelf, ſo he ſet about making a picture in ridicule of the induſtrious ſervants; but, either the thing itſelf was ſo difficult, or he proceeded with ſo much rage and trepidation, that it was a perfect caricature, and his friends prevailed with him to ſuppreſs it.

The poor author, in the mean time, was obliged to be conſtantly upon his guard, as there was always a ſet of deſperadoes lying in wait for him, armed with clubs, and fully determined to beat his brains out, if they could catch him in a proper place. In the mean time, they all agreed in telling lies upon him without ceaſing. They affirmed, that no body but a complete raſcal could be capable of ſuch a performance; that to betray ſervants to their maſters was, at any rate, a malicious trick: but, that for a ſervant to laugh at his fellow ſervants, and ſet

other people a laughing at them too, was the cleareſt demonſtration of a depraved heart. It was ten years after the fact was committed, that my informer left the country; and he declared that their reſentment had not abated in the leaſt degree: a circumſtance which, I obſerved, had made a deep impreſſion upon his mind; ſo that he would often ſay, From the fury of an enraged ſervant, good Lord deliver me. He alſo told me, that he was convinced by this example, that wit and humor was a talent unſpeakably prejudicial to the poſſeſſor: and therefore, if ever he had a child, and obſerved in him the leaſt turn that way, he would apply himſelf with the utmoſt aſſiduity to eradicate it as a vice.

CHAP. IX.

The carelessness of Servants in their work. A curious debate in a certain family, which issued in nothing.

IT will be eaſily perceived, from what has been ſaid above, that the greateſt part of the ſervants were exceſſively negligent. They ſeemed to have two great objects conſtantly in view, and to carry them on hand in hand; the increaſe of their wages, and the diminution of their labor. The truth is, however ſtrange it may ſeem theſe always bore an exact proportion to one another. Whenever a ſervant got more wages ſettled upon him, he looked upon it as a conſequence, that he ſhould be more ſlothful than before. In the mean time, it was remarkable what ingenious and plauſible reaſonings they always fell upon to juſtify their conduct. On this ſubject particularly they would ſay, What is well done is ſoon done, A ſmall piece of work, executed as it ought to be, is better than marring a great deal, which is worſe than idleneſs.

Inſtead of any other general remarks, I ſhall entertain the reader with a curious example of their ingenuity, in deviſing excuſes for their own neglect. This happened in the family of a great man, about three years after the publication of the ænigmatical picture, and plainly ſhowed

that, though the reproof had enraged them, it had contributed nothing to reform them. One morning, almoſt the whole ſervants of this family were gathered together in a large hall, to conſider what work it would be proper for them to fall about that day. A ſervant who, indeed, was not very well looked upon, as inclining a little to the ſober induſtrious kind, complained, that there had been for a long time an intolerable negligence in keeping the fences, and excluding ſtraying or ſtrange cattle from their maſters grounds. He therefore propoſed, that they ſhould immediately go in a body, drive out all the ſtrange cattle, without exception, that were in the incloſures, and mend up the fences, which were now in ſo ſorry a condition. He told them that there were many ſtrange cattle paſturing where they ought not to be; particularly, that he himſelf, not an hour before, had ſeen a large bull, with a thick neck, and dull heavy eyes, but *broad ſhoulders, firm joints, and a lank belly*, which made him fit for jumping. 'On this a diſpute aroſe, of which the reader may take the following juſt and faithful account.

One obſerved, that he could not agree to the motion, which proceeded from a perſon no way remarkable for a good temper. 'If our brother would look a little more at 'home, ſays he, perhaps he would find leſs reaſon for theſe 'ſnarling complaints of the negligence of others. The pro-'poſal is unkind and unbenevolent. There ſhould be great 'forbearance uſed in every family toward their neighbors. 'No doubt there have been, and there will be treſpaſſes 'upon both ſides; and therefore, I am humbly of opinion 'that no notice ſhould be taken of it at all.'

A ſecond then riſes up, and ſpeaks to the following effect. 'If I thought that any good would follow upon 'what is now propoſed, I ſhould readily agree to it. I 'am perhaps as much attached to my maſter's intereſt, as 'the perſon who made this motion, notwithſtanding all his 'fine profeſſions; but I am perſuaded it would be altoge-'ther in vain. There is a ſtrange diſpoſition, in beaſts of 'all kinds, to break into thoſe places from which there is 'any attempt to keep them out; it would therefore only 'increaſe the evil it pretends to remedy. All perſecution

'we know, helps the cauſe of the perſecuted; ſo that, ſup-
'poſing one has made an encroachment at this time, if
'he were driven out, we may depend upon it, he would
'immediately return with twenty more at his heals.'

A third made a very ſage and learned obſervation. 'Take notice, ſays he, what you are about to do. There 'is more difficulty in it than you apprehend. Is there 'not a very great ſimilarity in color, ſhape and ſize, be-'tween our maſter's cattle and his neighbor's? It would 'oblige us to a very ſtrict and particular examination, be-'fore we could determine the point. This would create 'ſuch difference of opinion, ſuch zeal and keenneſs in 'every one to ſupport his own ſentiments, that we might 'ſpend the whole time of our ſervice before we could 'come to any concluſion. I acknowledge it is a fixed 'principle, that every beaſt ſhould be kept only on his 'own maſter's grounds; put, I hope you will be ſenſible, it 'is only a ſpeculative point which beaſt belongs to one 'maſter, and which to another. On this ſubject, wiſe and 'good ſervants have differed in all ages, and will differ 'to the end of the world.'

A fourth delivered the following opinion. 'I cannot 'help being againſt the motion, for a reaſon that nobody 'has yet taken notice of. I can aſſure you from my 'certain knowledge, it would give great pleaſure to the 'ſtrange cattle themſelves, and, in particular to the bull, 'who ſeems to have given occaſion to the preſent debate. 'He has a vaſt ſatisfaction in being gazed upon and won-'dered at, which would be the certain conſequence of 'this attempt. Beſides, he is infected with an inveterate 'itch, which gives him an infinite pleaſure in being dri-'ven through the gaps of hedges, and being ſcrubbed 'and clawed by the thorns in the paſſage.'

A fifth ſaid, 'I am ſurpriſed to ſee ſo much time ſpent 'upon this ridiculous propoſal. The author of it ſeems 'to have forgot a fundamental law of the corporation, that 'no ſervant ſhould meddle with the affairs of another fa-'mily, or pretend to take the inſpection or government 'of any beaſts, but ſuch as belong to his own maſter. 'Now, ſays he, this is manifeſtly the caſe in the preſent

'instance; nay, it is even implied in the propoſal itſelf, 'which is, therefore, quite irregular and incompetent. If 'that bull does not belong to us, let his own maſter ſend 'for him when he pleaſes: we have nothing to do with 'him. Let us mind our own affairs.'

Then roſe a ſervant of ancient ſtanding, ſeveral of his teeth having been loſt by old age, who bore a particular mark of his maſter's favor. He was remarkable for making long ſpeeches, of which it was difficult to comprehend the meaning. After ſpeaking about half an hour, quite unintelligibly, he concluded thus. 'Brethren, I do 'not deny that ſuch a propoſal as this might have done 'very well in former times, when the fences were almoſt 'entire, and the offending ſtrangers very few; but, at pre-'ſent, it is quite romantic and impoſſible. Will any man 'ſeriouſly pretend, at this time of day, when the hedges 'are almoſt wholly broke down, and ſo many encroach-'ments on every hand, to affirm, that none ought to con-'tinue in the incloſures but ſuch as truly belong to our 'maſter. I am afraid his fields would make a very deſo-'late appearance, for there would be few left behind.'

Laſt of all, one tells them in a few words, that the debate was altogether idle; that there was a miſtake at the very bottom of the affair: for, by the beſt information he could procure, the beaſt in queſtion was not a bull but an ox.

To ſum up the matter, one or other of theſe various and contradictory reaſons prevailed upon a great majority, to come to this reſolution, That it was not prudent or expedient, at this time, to agree to the propoſal; and, therefore, the intruders in general ſhould be winked at, and that beaſt in particular, whether he were bull or ox, ſhould continue where he was.

CHAP. X.

Of the ambition and covetousness of the Servants, and the various methods they fell upon to gratify their desires.

I HAVE obſerved before, that the conſtitution in this province was framed with great care, and ſeemed particularly calculated to prevent ambition and love of preeminence. For this reaſon, they eſtabliſhed a parity among the ſervants, and took every meaſure they could think of, to prevent the introduction of overſeers and arch-overſeers. By this time, however, the ſervants had not only degenerated in point of fidelity and diligence, but had made great encroachments upon the conſtitution itſelf. They had a prodigious hankering after the high-ſounding titles, and immenſe revenues, which were given to ſervants in the neighboring province. It grieved them to hear, and ſometimes, when ſent upon buſineſs to that country, to ſee, that ſome of the overſeers lived in ſplendid palaces, and were carried about in chariots, while they themſelves were ſtill obliged to wear the dreſs of ſervants, and generally to walk a-foot.

Gladly would they have introduced theſe offices in their own province; but the great men, who had hitherto aſſiſted them, dreaded the expence, and would not agree to it. They were, therefore, obliged to proceed cautiouſly and gradually. In ſome few inſtances, they made it appear, that one ſervant might be introduced to two different families, and enjoy both the ſalaries. As to the work, they might be ſometimes in the one, and ſometimes in the other; or, if one of them was a family of ſmall conſequence, they might do well enough without any ſervant at all. They begged, in the moſt abject manner, of the governor of the province, that a ſmall number of ſalaries might be appointed, without any office annexed to them, by way of gratuities, for the encouragement of good ſervants. This was done; and there followed a terrible competition for obtaining them, which produced a moſt

malignant hatred between thoſe who were ſucceſsful and thoſe who were not.

The reader may perhaps imagine, that the hope of meriting theſe ſalaries would excite them to vie with one another, in doing the buſineſs of the families where they ſerved. It was quite the contrary. They tried every method of advancement but that only; or, if any did try it in that way, they were ſure to be diſappointed. Some of them uſed the old way of flattery, which had always a very great effect. Some became political tools, ſpies, and informers to the prevailing party at court. Some were not aſhamed to become pimps and panders to great men, and even ſometimes to attend them in their nocturnal expeditions. Some endeavored to make themſelves remarkable for feats and achievements quite out of the way of their own buſineſs. One of them, for example, would make a wind-mill, of curious ſtructure, and put it upon the top of the houſe where he lived. The conſequence of this was, that paſſengers going that way, after, ſtanding ſtill and admiring it a little, would aſk any perſon they ſaw near, who had done it. The anſwer immediately followed, *The servant who lives here, he is a most ingenious fellow, as ever was seen.* Thus was his fame ſpread abroad, and ſometimes came to the ears of the people above.

I cannot help particularly mentioning one, who was the moſt ſucceſsful of all that had gone before him, who was alive when my informer left the country, and probably may be alive at this very time. The method he fell upon, was telling wonderful ſtories of the heroic actions of that people's predeceſſors, a ſubject of which they were enthuſiaſtically fond. He had acquired a very great knack of ſtory-telling, and could deſcribe things ſo to the life, both by word and geſture, that every body was delighted to hear him. He immediately gave over all work in the family to which he belonged; and when they civilly put him in mind of his neglect, he told them they might go about their buſineſs, for they were a pack of ſeditious ſcoundrels, altogether below his notice. He was a fellow of uncommon ability; and no leſs remarkable

for enterprise and resolution. He carried on his schemes; procured for himself one salary after another; and did not fail to laugh at the simplicity of those who bestowed them, saying among his intimate companions, *He blessed God that mankind were so easily deceived, by the formal countenance of a servant.*

The supernumerary salaries, however, were so few, that they were soon exhausted, and did little else, indeed, than excite a hungering and thirsting after more. To remedy this, they fell upon a method of gratifying the vanity of those whose pockets they could not fill. A title was invented, which, (like the honorary rewards of the ancients in this part of the world) they said, would serve to distinguish illustrious merit, and raise a happy emulation. The title was, Master of Service; and the directors of the schools or places of exercise were appointed to bestow it, according to the skill and proficiency of the candidates. Immediately applications came in from all quarters, and it was dealt about very liberally, and, if possible, even more absurdly than the salaries had been before. There was hardly an instance of its being bestowed for real knowledge or useful industry; but for some whimsical qualification of a different kind. If a man had invented a new dance or song, or collected a whole barrel of salted butterflies in one summer, or made a gold chain for binding a flea to a post, he was instantly created a Master of Service.

CHAP. XI.

Of the sentiments of the People concerning the Servants, and their manner of treating them.

THE reader may probably be wondering in himself, how the people behaved in these circumstances, and what became of their affairs. He may be ready to think that their patience must be by this time nearly exhausted, and some terrible revolution at hand. The truth is, the patience of many of them had been at an end for many

years; but, being divided among themſelves, their influence was not ſufficient to produce a general change. It is impoſſible to mention all the effects which the conduct of the ſervants had upon the people; but it will be worth while to take particular notice of two claſſes of men, and their behaviour upon the ſubject.

One ſet of people roſe among them, whoſe ſentiments and conduct were as ſingular and extraordinary, as any thing recorded in this book. They were men who made high pretenſions to reaſon and penetration, and gave themſelves much to abſtract reflections upon the nature of things. They were of opinion, that all the wiſdom of the nation centred in themſelves; and that all the reſt were downright fools or madmen. However, entering upon their ſpeculations with ſuch an overweening conceit of themſelves, their boaſted reaſons firſt led them into many miſtakes, and at laſt fairly turned their heads.

It was their cuſtom to ſearch into hiſtory, and particularly into the hiſtory of the ſervants. There they found, that in every age, there had been a great deal of knavery among the ſervants. All the inſtances of this ſort they uſed to collect, publiſh, and compare with the conduct of the ſervants in their own times; which they expoſed with the greateſt ſeverity. At laſt, by long dwelling upon this ſubject, they came to be of opinion, that there ought to be no ſuch thing in nature as a ſervant; that they never had done any thing but harm; and that the world would be much better without them. Sometimes ſober-minded people attempted to ſet them to rights, and alledged, that though the diſhoneſt had always been too numerous as well as noiſy, yet ſtill there were ſome of great worth and uſefulneſs; nay, that ſociety, in the nature of things could not ſubſiſt without perſons in lower ſtations, to ſerve and accommodate thoſe in higher. This was ſo far from having an effect upon them, that they became always more poſitive upon contradiction, and ſcarce ever failed to advance opinions ſtill more wild and romantic than before. Inſtead of yielding that ſervants were neceſſary in ſociety, they affirmed, that it was not only deſirable, but extremely poſſible, to have a whole

nation of lords, without one perſon among them of inferior degree.

They affirmed, that excepting ſervants, all other men were by nature wiſe, honeſt, and active; fully ſufficient for their own happineſs; and that they would have been quite virtuous and happy, without any exception, if they had not been blind-folded and deceived by the ſervants. To this race, whom they uſed often in a fit of raving, to curſe in a moſt dreadful manner, they imputed all the envy, malice, oppreſſion, covetouſneſs, fraud, rapine, and bloodſhed that ever had happened ſince the beginning of the world. In ſupport of their ſcheme, they made learned diſquiſitions on nature, and the firſt cauſe of all things. They ſhewed that nature was, and muſt be wiſe and good in all her productions; and, therefore, that man muſt needs be free from every thing that is evil, and his original conſtitution perfectly juſt and ſound. All the diſorders that were to be ſeen in ſociety were eaſily accounted for, from the helliſh machinations of the ſervants.—In the mean time, it was obvious, that the ſervants were the product of nature too; and according to the ſame reaſoning, muſt have been of as gentle and tractable diſpoſitions, and in all reſpects as faultleſs as their maſters. This manifeſt difficulty in their own ſcheme, however unaccountable it may appear, they never once reflected upon, nor by conſequence attempted to reſolve.

Sometimes they were preſſed with the neceſſity of ſervants to cultivate the ground, which, if neglected, it was plain, would grow over with briers and thorns, and every noxious weed. Here they immediately recurred to their old argument, the excellency of nature's productions; and upon the ſtrength of it, preſumed abſolutely to deny the fact. They ſaid, were the earth only left to itſelf, it would produce nothing but what was uſeful and ſalutary, and that in great abundance, for the ſupport of its inhabitants; that all the pretended cultivation of it by the ſervants was but ſpoiling it; and that they themſelves had ſowed the ſeeds of every hurtful or unneceſſary plant. It was to no purpoſe to mention to them, either the vaſt tracts of uncultivated ground, or the deſolate condition of

a neglected field; all this, they pretended, arose from a certain sympathy in the several parts of the earth one with another, and from poisonous vapours easily carried by the wind, from the places where servants had been at work. In short, they sometimes projected a scheme for a new settlement where no servants should be admitted; and where they hoped, in a little time, every man would be as wise as a philosopher, as rich as a merchant, and as magnificent as a king.

After all, the perfection of their absurdity appeared in the following circumstance. Though it was plain, to any person of reflection, that their delirium took its rise from the tricks and misbehavior of bad servants, yet they had the most rooted and inveterate antipathy at those that were good. The reason, probably was, that the diligence and usefulness of this last sort stood directly in the way of their scheme, and prevented the rest of the nation from being of their opinion. All seemingly good servants they affirmed to be at bottom arrant knaves; and in one respect, unspeakably worse than any of the rest, because they appeared to be better. The idle, slothful, worthless servants, were frequently their companions; and it was one of their highest entertainments to lead such fellows into frolicks, mischief, or debauchery, and then point them out to their fellow citizens, and use words to this purpose, 'You poor hood-winked fools, do you see these rascals? 'why will you any longer harbor them in your houses? 'they are all of one complexion, and will infallibly bring 'you to misery and speedy destruction.'

CHAP. XII.

Continuation of the same subject. The sentiments and conduct of others, in consequence of the behaviour of the Servants.

WE are not to suppose that the whole nation lost their senses. No: by far the greater number acted as prudently and rationally as men could do in their

circumſtances. According to plain common ſenſe, in proportion as corruption and degeneracy increaſed among the ſervants, they ſet the higher value on ſuch as were honeſt and faithful. They uſed every mean in their power to procure ſuch for their own families, agreeably to the laws of the corporation. When this could not be brought about, or when a good-for nothing-fellow was buckled to the ſalary, they put themſelves to the additional expence of hiring one according to their own mind; paid the former his wages duly, and only deſired the favor of him to give them no trouble, but ſpend his time according to his own fancy.

It was pleaſant enough to obſerve the different conduct of the eſtabliſhed ſervants, according to their different tempers, when they fell under this predicament. Some of them were greatly enraged to ſee the ſervice of another preferred to theirs, uſed many artful methods to prevent it where they could, and took every opportunity of venting their malice, or glutting their revenge when they could not. Where they could get any body to believe them, they aſſerted that all ſkill and power of doing good was confined to the corporation; that it was inherent in them, and deſcended in their blood from one generation to another, like courage in the race of game cocks. The others, they pretended, were a ſpurious brood, and that it was impoſſible to train them ſo as to make them fit for ſervice.

If this did not gain credit, all poſſible pains were taken to diſparage the conduct of the additional ſervants. Their work was examined with the greateſt ſtrictneſs, every flaw in it pointed out, and many faults imputed to it merely through envy. If any piece of work appeared to be ſubſtantial, they pretended it wanted neatneſs, and was altogether inelegant. This charge, however, made little impreſſion upon the people. They had been ſo long plagued with ſervants who minded nothing but ornament, both in their perſons and their work, that they were rather pleaſed than diſguſted with one of a more homely carriage.

When nothing elſe would do, the groſſeſt lies and calumnies were ſpread, both of the new ſervants and thoſe who employed them. It was pretended, that they ſowed the ſeeds of ſedition and diſaffection, in the families where they got admittance. Sometimes this accuſation, though utterly groundleſs, obtained ſuch credit with the governors, that, if they had a complaint to make, or a cauſe to try, they could ſcarcely expect juſtice. It was alſo alledged, that they terrified the children out of their wits, by telling frightful ſtories in the winter evenings. You might meet with many of the eſtabliſhed ſervants who aſſerted, and even ſeemed to believe, that all who employed any other than themſelves, were idiots or crack-brained, and deſtitute of common ſenſe.

On the other hand, not a few of the eſtabliſhed ſervants were altogether indifferent how many others were hired, and how little work was left to themſelves. They knew that their wages were well ſecured to them, which was the main chance; and they found rather more time and liberty to follow the bent of their inclinations. Perhaps they would have been better ſatisfied if the people had been content with what kind and quality of work they thought proper to do. But, as this was not to be expected, the hiring of others rendered all matters perfectly eaſy, and their lives were one continued ſcene of indolence or pleaſure.

In the mean time, it was highly diverting to hear how they expreſſed themſelves upon this ſubject, and with how much art and cunning they made a virtue of neceſſity. They uſed to extol their own candor and benevolence. 'Gentlemen,' one of them would ſay, 'you ſee with what 'diſcretion I uſe you. I am always glad to ſee liberty 'prevail, and every man ſuffered to do what ſeems pro-'per to himſelf. I am well pleaſed, that you ſhould hire 'as many ſervants as you incline. I aſk no more, than 'that I may have a clean neat bed-chamber, in a conve-'nient part of the houſe, my wages well and regularly 'paid, and a ſmall bit of ground in the garden, to bring 'up a few delicious herbs and fruits for my own uſe. If 'theſe things are properly attended to, you ſhall find me

'a good man to live with; I ſhall never interfere with 'your work in the leaſt, or give you any manner of trou- 'ble, even by making remarks upon it.' In ſuch a caſe, it would happen now and then, that one of the family, touched a little with the abſurdity of this phlegmatick ſpeech, would anſwer, 'That very well he might make 'himſelf eaſy, ſince, all the while, he was well fed and 'clothed at their expence.' This he would receive with ſilent contempt, and diſplay the greateſt ſatisfaction in his own compoſure of ſpirit, and meekneſs of temper.

As for the remaining part of the nation, they reflected very little upon their condition, but took ſuch ſervants as were ſent to them, and rubbed on as well as they could. Such quiet and paſſive people were highly extolled by the ſervants, who took all opportunities of declaring, that they were the only ſolid and rational perſons in the whole kingdom. Theſe praiſes delighted them greatly; ſo that they lived as poor and as merry as beggars, who have nothing to hope, and nothing to fear.

CONCLUSION.

THUS I have given the reader an account of this extraordinary claſs of men; and, I am certain, he muſt confeſs, there is ſomething in their characters and conduct, proper to excite a mixture of laughter and indignation. It is alſo probable, that he feels a conſiderable degree of ſympathy with the deluded and oppreſſed people, and is anxious to know whether there appeared any proſpect of deliverance. This was a queſtion I often aſked at my informer, who aſſured me that, from what he had heard and ſeen, there was not the moſt diſtant proſpect of reformation by the ſervants themſelves. The honeſter ſort were always borne down, traduced and ſlandered; and thoſe of an oppoſite character, had ſo long

kept the management of the corporation in their hands, that they reckoned themſelves ſecure in their authority, and openly ſet at defiance both the people in general, and their fellow ſervants.

There remained juſt a glimpſe of hope from one quarter, viz. the gentlemen who had been choſen to the office of helpers. They had at firſt contributed as much as any to the introduction of wrong meaſures; but, not being under the temptation of intereſt, they began to open their eyes at laſt. For ſome years they had been a conſiderable reſtraint upon the violence of the ſervants, and had prevented them in ſeveral inſtances from degrading, ſtripping, and branding thoſe who had incurred their diſpleaſure, by doing buſineſs at unſeaſonable hours. They had alſo contributed to the diſgrace and diſmiſſion of ſome drunken ſots, and laſcivious wretches, whom ſeveral of the leading ſervants had a ſtrong inclination to ſpare. From theſe circumſtances, ſome flattered themſelves that a change might be brought about; and that, though the ſervants would never think of any reformation themſelves, it would ſoon be *forced upon them by a foreign hand.*

After all, it was but very uncertain whether any material change would ſoon take place; and therefore, while we can only ſend that unhappy people our good wiſhes, we have reaſon to rejoice in our own good fortune, that we are perfectly free from impoſitions of the ſame or any ſimilar kind.

LECTURES

ON

MORAL

PHILOSOPHY.

IN JUSTICE to the memory of Dr. Witherspoon, it ought to be stated that he did not intend these lectures for the press, and that he once compelled a printer who, without his knowledge, had undertaken to publish them, to desist from the design, by threatning a prosecution as the consequence of persisting in it. The Doctor's lectures on morals, notwithstanding they assume the form of regular discourses, were in fact, viewed by himself as little more than a syllabus or compend, on which he might enlarge before a class at the times of recitation; and not intending that they should go further, or be otherwise considered, he took freely and without acknowledgment from writers of character such ideas, and perhaps expressions, as he found suited to his purpose. But though these causes would not permit the Dr. himself to give to the public these sketches of moral philosophy, it is believed that they ought not to operate so powerfully on those into whose hands his papers have fallen since his death. Many of his pupils whose eminence in literature and distinction in society give weight to their opinions, have thought that these lectures, with all their imperfections, contain one of the best and most perspicuous exhibitions of the radical principles of the science on which they treat that has ever been made, and they have very importunately demanded their publication in this edition of his works: Nor is it conceived that a compliance with this demand, after the explanation here given can do any injury to the Dr's. reputation. And to the writer of this note it does not seem a sufficient reason that a very valuable work should be consigned to oblivion, because it is in some measure incomplete, or because it is partly a selection from authors to whom a distinct reference cannot now be made.

LECTURES

ON

MORAL PHILOSOPHY.

MORAL Philoſophy is that branch of Science which treats of the principles and laws of Duty or Morals. It is called *Philoſophy*, becauſe it is an inquiry into the nature and grounds of moral obligation by reaſon, as diſtinct from revelation.

Hence ariſes a queſtion, is it lawful, and is it ſafe or uſeful to ſeparate moral philoſophy from religion? It will be ſaid, it is either the ſame or different from revealed truth; if the ſame, unneceſſary—if different, falſe and dangerous.

An author of New-England, ſays, moral philoſophy is juſt reducing infidelity to a ſyſtem. But however ſpecious the objections, they will be found at bottom not ſolid.—If the Scripture is true, the diſcoveries of reaſon cannot be contrary to it; and therefore, it has nothing to fear from that quarter. And as we are certain it can do no evil, ſo there is a probability that it may do much good. There may be an illuſtration and confirmation of the inſpired writings, from reaſon and obſervation, which will greatly add to their beauty and force.

The noble and eminent improvements in natural philoſophy, which have been made ſince the end of the laſt century, have been far from hurting the intereſt of religion; on the contrary, they have greatly promoted it. Why ſhould it not be the ſame with moral philoſophy,

which is indeed nothing elſe but the knowledge of human nature? It is true, that infidels do commonly proceed upon pretended principles of reaſon. But as it is impoſſible to hinder them from reaſoning on this ſubject, the beſt way is to meet them upon their own ground, and to ſhow from reaſon itſelf, the fallacy of their principles. I do not know any thing that ſerves more for the ſupport of religion than to ſee from the different and oppoſite ſyſtems of philoſophers, that there is nothing certain in their ſchemes, but what is coincident with the word of God.

Some there are, and perhaps more in the preſent than any former age, who deny the law of nature, and ſay, that all ſuch ſentiments as have been uſually aſcribed to the law of nature, are from revelation and tradition.

We muſt diſtinguiſh here between the light of nature and the law of nature: by the firſt is to be underſtood what we can or do diſcover by our own powers, without revelation or tradition: by the ſecond, that which, when diſcovered, can be made appear to be agreeable to reaſon and nature.

There have been ſome very ſhrewd and able writers of late, viz. Dr. Willſon, of New Caſtle, and Mr. Riccalton of Scotland, who have written againſt the light of nature, ſhewing that the firſt principles of knowledge are taken from information. That nothing can be ſuppoſed more rude and ignorant, than man without inſtruction. That when men have been brought up ſo, they have ſcarcely been ſuperior to brutes. It is very difficult to be preciſe upon this ſubject, and to diſtinguiſh the diſcoveries of reaſon from the exerciſe of it. Yet I think, admitting all, or the greateſt part, of what ſuch contend for, we may, notwithſtanding, conſider how far any thing is conſonant to reaſon, or may be proven by reaſon; though perhaps reaſon, if left to itſelf, would never have diſcovered it.

Dr. Clark was one of the greateſt champions for the law of nature; but it is only ſince his time that the ſhrewd oppoſers of it have appeared. The Hutchinſonians (ſo called from Hutchinſon of England) inſiſt that not only

all moral, but also all natural knowledge comes from revelation, the true system of the world, true chronology, all human arts, &c. In this, as is usual with most other classes of men, they carry their nostrum to extravagance. I am of opinion, that the whole Scripture is perfectly agreeable to sound philosophy; yet certainly it was never intended to teach us every thing. The political law of the Jews contains many noble principles of equity, and excellent examples to future lawgivers; yet it was so local and peculiar, that certainly it was never intended to be immutable and universal.

It would be more just and useful to say that all simple and original discoveries have been the production of Providence, and not the invention of man. On the whole, it seems reasonable to make moral philosophy, in the sense above explained, a subject of study. And indeed let men think what they will of it, they ought to acquaint themselves with it. They must know what it is, if they mean even to show that it is false.

The Division of the Subject.

Moral philosophy is divided into two great branches, Ethics and Politics, to this some add Jurisprudence, though this may be considered as a part of politics.

Ethics relate to personal duties, Politics to the constitution, government, and rights of societies, and jurisprudence, to the administration of justice in constituted states.

It seems a point agreed upon, that the principles of duty and obligation must be drawn from the nature of man. That is to say, if we can discover how his Maker formed him, or for what he intended him, that certainly is what he ought to be.

The knowledge of human nature, however, is either perplexed and difficult of itself, or hath been made so, by the manner in which writers in all ages have treated it. Perhaps this circumstance itself, is a strong presumption of the truth of the Scripture doctrine of the depravity and corruption of our nature. Supposing this depravity,

it muſt be one great cauſe of difficulty and confuſion in giving an account of human nature as the work of God.

This I take to be indeed the caſe with the greateſt part of our moral and theological knowledge.

Thoſe who deny this depravity, will be apt to plead for every thing, or for many things as dictates of nature, which are in reality propenſities of nature in its preſent ſtate, but at the ſame time the fruit and evidence of its departure from its original purity. It is by the remaining power of natural conſcience that we muſt endeavor to detect and oppoſe theſe errors.

(1) We may conſider man very generally in his ſpecies as diſtinct from and ſuperior to the other creatures, and what it is, in which the difference truly conſiſts. (2) As an individual, what are the parts which conſtitute his nature.

1. Philoſophers have generally attempted to aſſign the preciſe diſtinction between men and the other animals; but when endeavoring to bring it to one peculiar incommunicable characteriſtic, they have generally contradicted one another and ſometimes diſputed with violence, and rendered the thing more uncertain.

The difficulty of fixing upon a preciſe criterion, only ſerves to ſhow that in man we have an example of what we ſee alſo every where elſe, viz. a beautiful and inſenſible gradation from one thing to another, ſo that the higheſt of the inferior is, as it were, connected and blended with the loweſt of the ſuperior claſs. Birds and beaſts are connected by ſome ſpecies, ſo that you will find it hard to ſay whether they belong to the one or the other—So indeed it is in the whole vegetable as well as animal kingdom. (1) Some ſay *men* are diſtinguiſhed from brutes by reaſon, and certainly this, either in kind or degree, is the moſt honorable of our diſtinctions. (2) Others ſay that many brutes give ſtrong ſigns of reaſon, as dogs, horſes and elephants. But that man is diſtinguiſhed by memory and foreſight: but I apprehend that theſe are upon the ſame footing with reaſon, if there are ſome glimmerings of reaſon in the brute creation, there are alſo manifeſt proofs of memory and ſome of foreſight. (3) Some have thought it proper to diſtinguiſh man from the inferior creatures by

the uſe of ſpeech, no other creatures having an articulate language. Here again we are obliged to acknowledge that our diſtinction is chiefly the excellence and fulneſs of articulate diſcourſe; for brutes have certainly the art of making one another underſtand many things by ſound.—(4) Some have ſaid that man is not completely diſtinguiſhed by any of theſe, but by a ſenſe of religion. And I think it muſt be admitted that of piety or a ſenſe of a Supreme Being, there is not any trace to be ſeen in the inferior creatures. The ſtories handed about by weak-minded perſons, or retailed by credulous authors, of reſpect in them to churches, or ſacred perſons, are to be diſdained as wholly fabulous and viſionary. (5) There have been ſome who have ſaid that man is diſtinguiſhed from the brutes by a ſenſe of *ridicule*.

The whole creation (ſays a certain author) is grave except man, no one laughs but himſelf. There is ſomething whimſical in fixing upon this as the criterion, and it does not ſeem to ſet us in a very reſpectable light. Perhaps it is not improper to ſmile upon the occaſion, and to ſay, that if this ſentiment is embraced, we ſhall be obliged to confeſs kindred with the apes, who are certainly themſelves poſſeſſed of a riſible faculty, as well as qualified to excite laughter in us. On the whole there ſeems no neceſſity of fixing upon ſome one criterion to the excluſion of others.

There is a great and apparent diſtinction between man and the inferior animals, not only in the beauty of his form, which the poet takes notice of, Os homini ſublime dedit, &c. but alſo in reaſon, memory, reflection, and the knowledge of God and a future ſtate.

A general diſtinction, which deſerves particularly to be taken notice of in moral diſquiſitions, is, that man is evidently made to be guided, and protected from dangers, and ſupplied with what is uſeful more by reaſon, and brutes more by inſtinct.

It is not very eaſy and perhaps not neceſſary to explain inſtinct. It is ſomething previous to reaſon and choice. When we ſay the birds build their neſts by inſtinct, and man builds his habitation by reflection, experience or

† which

inſtruction, we underſtand the thing well enough, but if we attempt to give a logical definition of either the one or the other, it will immediately be aſſaulted by a thouſand arguments.

Though man is evidently governed by ſomething elſe than inſtinct, he alſo has ſeveral inſtinctive propenſities, ſome of them independent of, and ſome of them intermixed with his moral diſpoſitions. Of the firſt kind are hunger, thirſt, and ſome others; of the laſt is the *storgé* or parental tenderneſs towards offspring.

On inſtinct we ſhall only ſay farther, that it leads more immediately to the appointment of the Creator, and whether in man, or in other creatures, operates more early and more uniformly than reaſon.

LECTURE II.

2d. CONSIDERING man as an individual, we diſcover the moſt obvious and remarkable circumſtances of his nature, that he is a compound of body and ſpirit. I take this for granted here, becauſe we are only explaining the nature of man. When we come to his ſentiments and principles of action, it will be more proper, to take notice of the ſpirituality and immortality of the ſoul, and how they are proved.

The body and ſpirit have a great reciprocal influence one upon another. The body on the temper and diſpoſition of the ſoul, and the ſoul on the ſtate and habit of the body. The body is properly the miniſter of the ſoul, the means of conveying perceptions to it, but nothing without it.

It is needleſs to enlarge upon the ſtructure of the body; this is ſufficiently known to all, except we deſcend to anatomical exactneſs, and then, like all the other parts of nature, it ſhows the infinite wiſdom of the Creator. With regard to morals, the influence of the body in a certain view may be very great in enſlaving men to appetite, and yet there does not ſeem any ſuch connexion with

morals as to require a particular deſcription. I think there is little reaſon to doubt that there are great and eſſential differences between man and man, as to the ſpirit and its proper powers; but it ſeems plain that ſuch are the laws of union between the body and ſpirit, that many faculties are weakened and ſome rendered altogether incapable of exerciſe, merely by an alteration of the ſtate of the body. Memory is frequently loſt and judgment weakened by old age and diſeaſe. Sometimes, by a confuſion of the brain in a fall, the judgment is wholly diſordered. The inſtinctive appetites of hunger, and thirſt, ſeem to reſide directly in the body, and the ſoul to have little more than a paſſive perception. Some paſſions, particularly fear and rage, ſeem alſo to have their ſeat in the body, immediately producing a certain modification of the blood and ſpirits.—This indeed is perhaps the caſe in ſome degree with all paſſions whenever they are indulged, they give a modification to the blood and ſpirits, which make them eaſily rekindled, but there are none which do ſo inſtantaneouſly ariſe from the body, and prevent deliberation, will and choice, as theſe now named. To conſider the evil paſſions to which we are liable, we may ſay thoſe that depend moſt upon the body, are fear, anger, voluptuouſneſs, and thoſe that depend leaſt upon it, are ambition, envy, covetouſneſs.

The faculties of the mind are commonly divided into theſe three kinds, the underſtanding, the will, and the affections; though perhaps it is proper to obſerve, that theſe are not three qualities wholly diſtinct, as if they were three different beings, but different ways of exerting the ſame ſimple principle. It is the ſoul or mind that underſtands, wills, or is affected with pleaſure and pain. The underſtanding ſeems to have truth for its object, the diſcovering things as they really are in themſelves, and in their relations one to another. It has been diſputed whether good be in any degree the object of the underſtanding. On the one hand it ſeems as if truth and that only belonged to the underſtanding; becauſe we can eaſily ſuppoſe perſons of equal intellectual powers and oppoſite moral characters. Nay, we can ſuppoſe malignity joined

to a high degree of underſtanding, and virtue or true goodneſs, to a much lower. On the other hand, the choice made by the will ſeems to have the judgment or deliberation of the underſtanding as its very foundation. How can this be, it will be ſaid, if the underſtanding has nothing to do with good or evil. A conſiderable oppoſition of ſentiments among philoſophers, has ariſen from this queſtion. Dr. Clark, and ſome others make underſtanding or reaſon the immediate principle of virtue. Shaftſbury, Hutchinſon, and others, make affection the principle of it. Perhaps neither the one nor the other is wholly right. Probably both are neceſſary.

The connexion between truth and goodneſs, between the underſtanding and the heart, is a ſubject of great moment, but alſo of great difficulty. I think we may ſay with certainty, that infinite perfection, intellectual and moral, are united and inſeparable in the Supreme Being. There is not however in inferior natures an exact proportion between the one and the other; yet I apprehend that truth naturally and neceſſarily promotes goodneſs, and falſehood the contrary; but as the influence is reciprocal, malignity of diſpoſition, even with the greateſt natural powers, blinds the underſtanding, and prevents the perception of truth itſelf.

Of the will it is uſual to enumerate four acts; deſire, averſion, joy and ſorrow. The two laſt, Hutchinſon ſays are ſuperfluous, in which he ſeems to be right. All the acts of the will may be reduced to the two great heads of deſire and averſion, or in other words, chuſing and refuſing.

The affections are called alſo paſſions, becauſe often excited by external objects. In as far as they differ from a calm deliberate deciſion of the judgment, or determination of the will, they may be called ſtrong propenſities, implanted in our nature, which of themſelves contribute not a little to bias the judgment, or incline the will.

The affections cannot be better underſtood than by obſerving the difference between a calm deliberate general inclination, whether of the ſelfiſh or benevolent

kind, and particular violent inclinations. Every man deliberately wiſhes his own happineſs, but this differs conſiderably from a paſſionate attachment to particular gratifications, as a love of riches, honors, pleaſures. A good man will have a deliberate fixed deſire of the welfare of mankind; but this differs from the love of children, relations, friends, country.

The paſſions are very numerous and may be greatly diverſified, becauſe every thing, however modified, that is the object of deſire or averſion, may grow by accident or indulgence, to ſuch a ſize as to be called, and deſerve to be called, a paſſion. Accordingly we expreſs ourſelves thus in the Engliſh language. A paſſion for horſes, dogs, play, &c.

However all the paſſions may be ranged under the two great heads of *love* and *hatred*. To the firſt belong eſteem, admiration, good-will, and every ſpecies of approbation, delight, and deſire; to the other, all kinds of averſion, and ways of expreſſing it, *envy*, *malice*, *rage*, *revenge*, to whatever objects they may be directed.

Hope and fear, joy and ſorrow, though frequently ranked among the paſſions, ſeem rather to be ſtates or modifications of the mind, attending the exerciſe of every paſſion, according as its object is probable or improbable, poſſeſt or loſt.

Jealouſy ſeems to be a paſſion of a middle nature, which it is not eaſy to ſay whether it ſhould be ranked under the head of love or hatred. It is often ſaid of jealouſy between the ſexes, that it ſprings from love; yet, it ſeems plainly impoſſible, that it can have place without forming an ill opinion of its object, at leaſt in ſome degree. The ſame thing may be ſaid of jealouſy and ſuſpicion in friendſhip.

The paſſions may be ranged in two claſſes in a different way, viz. as they are ſelfiſh or benevolent, public or private. There will be great occaſion to conſider this diſtinction afterwards, in explaining the nature of virtue, and the motives that lead to it. What is obſerved now, is only to illuſtrate our nature as it really is. There is a great and real diſtinction between paſſions, ſelfiſh and benevolent. The firſt point directly, and immediately at

our own intereſt in the gratification; the others point immediately at the happineſs of others. Of the firſt kind, is the love of fame, power, property, pleaſure. And of the ſecond, is family and domeſtic affection, friendſhip and patriotiſm. It is to no purpoſe to ſay, that ultimately, it is to pleaſe ourſelves, or becauſe we feel a ſatisfaction in ſeeking the good of others; for it is certain, that the direct object in view in many caſes, is to promote the happineſs of others; and for this many have been willing to ſacrifice every thing, even life itſelf.

After this brief ſurvey of human nature, in one light, or in one point of view, which may be called its capacity, it will be neceſſary to return back, and take a ſurvey of the way, in which we become acquainted with the objects about which we are to be converſant, or upon which the above faculties are to be exerciſed.

On this it is proper to obſerve in general, that there are but two ways in which we come to the knowledge of things, viz. 1ſt, Senſation, 2d, Reflection.

The firſt of theſe muſt be divided again into two parts, external and internal.

External ariſes from the immediate impreſſion of objects from without. The external ſenſes in number are five; ſeeing, hearing, feeling, taſting and ſmelling.

In theſe are obſervable the impreſſion itſelf, or the ſenſation we feel, and the ſuppoſition inſeparable from it, that it is produced by an external object. That our ſenſes are to be truſted in the information they give us, ſeems to me a firſt principle, becauſe they are the foundation of all our after reaſonings. The few exceptions of accidental irregularity in the ſenſes, can found no juſt objection to this, as there are ſo many plain and obvious ways of diſcovering and correcting it.

The reality of the material ſyſtem I think, may be eaſily eſtabliſhed, except upon ſuch principles as are ſubverſive of all certainty, and lead to univerſal ſcepticiſm; and perſons who would maintain ſuch principles, do not deſerve to be reaſoned with, becauſe they do not pretend to communicate knowledge, but to take all knowledge from us.

The Immaterialiſts ſay, that we are conſcious of nothing but the impreſſion or feeling of our own mind; but they do not obſerve that the impreſſion itſelf, implies and ſuppoſes ſomething external that communicates it, and cannot be ſeparated from that ſuppoſition. Sometimes ſuch reaſoners tell us, that we cannot ſhew the ſubſtance ſeparate from its ſenſible qualities; no more can any man ſhew me a ſenſible quality ſeparate from a particular ſubject. If any man will ſhew me whiteneſs, without ſhewing me any thing that is white, or roundneſs without any thing that is round, I will ſhew him the ſubſtance without either color or ſhape.

Immaterialiſm takes away the diſtinction between truth and falſhood. I have an idea of a houſe or tree in a certain place, and I call this true, that is, I am of opinion, there is really a houſe or tree in that place. Again, I form an idea of a houſe or tree, as what may be in that place; I aſk what is the difference, if after all, you tell me, there is neither tree, houſe nor place any where exiſting. An advocate for that ſyſtem ſays, that truth conſiſts in the livelineſs of the idea, than which nothing can be more manifeſtly falſe. I can form as diſtinct an idea of any thing that is not, as any thing that is, when it is abſent from my ſight. I have a much more lively idea of Jupiter and Juno, and many of their actions, from Homer and Virgil, though I do not believe that any of them ever exiſted, than I have of many things that I know happened within theſe few months.

The truth is, the immaterial ſyſtem, is a wild and ridiculous attempt to unſettle the principles of common ſenſe by metaphyſical reaſoning, which can hardly produce any thing but contempt in the generality of perſons who hear it, and which I verily believe, never produced conviction even on the perſons who pretend to eſpouſe it.

LECTURE III.

INTERNAL ſenſation is what Mr. Hutchinſon calls the finer powers of perception. It takes it riſe from external objects, but by abſtraction, conſiders ſomething farther than merely the ſenſible qualities—

1. Thus with reſpect to many objects, there is a ſenſe of beauty in the appearance, ſtructure or compoſition, which is altogether diſtinct from mere color, ſhape and extenſion. How then is this beauty perceived? It enters by the eye, but it is perceived and reliſhed by what may be well enough called an internal ſenſe, quality or capacity of the mind.

2. There is a ſenſe of pleaſure in imitation, whence the arts of painting, ſculpture, poetry, are often called the imitative arts. It is eaſy to ſee that the imitation itſelf gives the pleaſure, for we receive much pleaſure from a lively deſcription of what would be painful to behold.

3. A ſenſe of harmony.

4. A ſenſe of order or proportion.

Perhaps after all, the whole of theſe ſenſes may be conſidered as belonging to one claſs, and to be the particulars which either ſingly, or by the union of ſeveral of them, or of the whole, produce what is called the pleaſures of the imagination. If ſo, we may extend theſe ſenſes to every thing that enters into the principles of beauty and gracefulneſs.—Order, proportion, ſimplicity, intricacy, uniformity, variety—eſpecially as theſe principles have any thing in common that is equally applicable to all the fine arts, painting, ſtatuary, architecture, muſic, poetry, oratory.

The various theories upon the principles of beauty, or what it is that properly conſtitutes it, are of much importance on the ſubject of taſte and criticiſm, but of very little in point of morals. Whether it be a ſimple perception that cannot be analyſed, or a Je ne ſcai quoi, as the French call it, that cannot be diſcovered, it is the ſame thing to our preſent purpoſe, ſince it cannot be denied,

that there is a perception of beauty, and that this is very different from the mere color or dimenſions of the object. This beauty extends to the form and ſhape of viſible, or to the grace and motion of living objects; indeed, to all works of art, and productions of genius.

Theſe are called the reflex ſenſes ſometimes, and it is of moment to obſerve both that they really belong to our nature, and that they are very different from the groſſer perceptions of external ſenſe.

It muſt alſo be obſerved, that ſeveral diſtinguiſhed writers have added as an internal ſenſe, that of morality, a ſenſe and perception of moral excellence, and our obligation to conform ourſelves to it in our conduct.

Though there is no occaſion to join Mr. Hutchinſon or any other, in their oppoſition to ſuch as make reaſon the principle of virtuous conduct, yet I think it muſt be admitted, that a ſenſe of moral good and evil, is as really a principle of our nature, as either the groſs external or reflex ſenſes, and as truly diſtinct from both, as they are from each other.

This moral ſenſe is preciſely the ſame thing with what, in ſcripture and common language, we call conſcience. It is the law which our Maker has written upon our hearts, and both intimates and enforces duty, previous to all reaſoning. The oppoſers of innate ideas, and of the law of nature, are unwilling to admit the reality of a moral ſenſe, yet their objections are wholly frivolous. The neceſſity of education and information to the production and exerciſe of the reflex ſenſes or powers of the imagination, is every whit as great as to the application of the moral ſenſe. If therefore any one ſhould ſay, as is often done by Mr. Locke, if there are any innate principles what are they? enumerate them to me, if they are eſſential to man they muſt be in every man; let me take any artleſs clown and examine him, and ſee if he can tell me what they are.—I would ſay, if the principles of taſte are natural they muſt be univerſal. Let me try the clown then, and ſee whether he will agree with us, either in diſcovering the beauty of a poem or picture, or being able to aſſign the reaſons of his approbation.

There are two ſenſes which are not eaſily reducible to any of the two kinds of internal ſenſes, and yet certainly belong to our nature. They are allied to one another—A ſenſe of ridicule, and a ſenſe of honor and ſhame. A ſenſe of the ridiculous is ſomething peculiar; for though it be admitted that every thing that is ridiculous is at the ſame time unreaſonable and abſurd; yet it is as certain the terms are not convertible, for any thing that is abſurd is not ridiculous. There are an hundred falſhoods in mathematics and other ſciences, that do not tempt any body to laugh.

Shaftſbury has, through his whole writings, endeavored to eſtabliſh this principle, that ridicule is the teſt of truth; but the falſhood of that opinion appears from the above remark, for there is ſomething really diſtinct from reaſoning in ridicule. It ſeems to be putting imagination in the place of reaſon.—See Brown's Eſſays on the Characteriſtics.

A ſenſe of honor and ſhame ſeems, in a certain view, to ſubject us to the opinions of others, as they depend upon the ſentiments of our fellow-creatures. Yet, perhaps we may conſider this ſentiment as intended to be an aſſiſtant or guard to virtue, by making us apprehend reproach from others for what is in itſelf worthy of blame. This ſenſe is very ſtrong and powerful in its effects, whether it be guided by true or falſe principles.

After this ſurvey of human nature, let us conſider how we derive either the nature or obligation of duty from it.

One way is to conſider what indications we have from our nature, of the way that leads to the trueſt happineſs. This muſt be done by a careful attention to the ſeveral claſſes of perceptions and affections, to ſee which of them are moſt excellent, delightful, or deſirable.

They will then ſoon appear to be of three great claſſes, as mentioned above, eaſily diſtinguiſhable from one another, and gradually riſing above one another.

1. The gratification of the external ſenſes. This affords ſome pleaſure. We are led to deſire what is pleaſing, and to avoid what is diſguſtful to them.

2. The finer powers of perception give a delight which is evidently more excellent, and which we muſt neceſſarily pronounce more noble. Poetry, painting, muſic, &c. the exertion of genius, and exerciſe of the mental powers in general, give a pleaſure, though not ſo tumultuous, much more refined, and which does not ſo ſoon ſatiate.

3. Superior to both theſe, is a ſenſe of moral excellence, and a pleaſure ariſing from doing what is dictated by the moral ſenſe.

It muſt doubtleſs be admitted that this repreſentation is agreeable to truth, and that to thoſe who would calmly and fairly weigh the delight of moral action, it muſt appear ſuperior to any other gratification, being moſt *noble*, *pure* and *durable*. Therefore we might conclude, that it is to be preferred before all other ſources of pleaſure—that they are to give way to it when oppoſite, and to be no otherwiſe embraced than in ſubſerviency to it.

But though we cannot ſay there is any thing falſe in this theory, there are certainly very eſſential defects.—As for example, it wholly confounds, or leaves entirely undiſtinguiſhed, acting virtuouſly from ſeeking happineſs: ſo that promoting our own happineſs will in that caſe be the eſſence or definition of virtue, and a view to our own intereſt will be the ſole and complete obligation to virtue. Now there is good ground to believe not only that reaſon teaches us, but that the moral ſenſe dictates to us, ſomething more on both heads, viz. that there are diſintereſted affections that point directly at the good of others, and that theſe are ſo far from meriting to be excluded from the notion of virtue altogether, that they rather ſeem to claim a preference to the ſelfiſh affections. I know the friends of the ſcheme of ſelf-intereſt have a way of coloring or ſolving this. They ſay, men only approve and delight in benevolent affections, as pleaſing and delightful to themſelves. But this is not ſatisfying, for it ſeems to weaken the force of public affection very much, to refer it all to ſelf intereſt, and when nature ſeems to be carrying you out of yourſelf, by ſtrong inſtinctive propenſities or implanted affections, to turn the current and

direction of these into the stream of self-interest, in which experience tells us we are most apt to run to a vicious excess.

Besides it is affirmed, and I think with good reason, that the moral sense carries a good deal more in it than merely an approbation of a certain class of actions as beautiful, praise-worthy or delightful, and therefore finding our interest in them as the most noble gratification. The moral sense implies also a sense of obligation, that such and such things are right and others wrong; that we are bound in duty to do the one, and that our conduct is hateful, blameable, and deserving of punishment, if we do the contrary; and there is also in the moral sense or conscience, an apprehension or belief that reward and punishment will follow, according as we shall act in the one way, or in the other.

It is so far from being true, that there is no more in virtuous action than a superior degree of beauty, or a more noble pleasure, that indeed the beauty and sweetness of virtuous action arises from this very circumstance—that it is a compliance with duty or supposed obligation. Take away this, and the beauty vanishes as well as the pleasure. Why is it more pleasant to do a just or charitable action, than to satisfy my palate with delightful meat, or to walk in a beautiful garden, or read an exquisite poem? only because I feel myself under an obligation to do it, as a thing useful and important in itself. It is not duty because pleasing, but pleasing because duty.—The same thing may be said of beauty and approbation. I do not approve of the conduct of a plain, honest, industrious, pious man, because it is more beautiful than that of an idle profligate, but I say it is more beautiful and amiable, because he keeps within the bounds of duty. I see a higher species of beauty in moral action: but, it arises from a sense of obligation. It may be said, that my interest and duty are the same, because they are inseparable, and the one arises from the other; but there is a real distinction and priority of order. A thing is not my duty, because it is my interest, but it is a wise appointment of nature, that I shall forfeit my interest, if I neglect my duty.

Several other remarks might be made to confirm this. When any perſon has by experience found that in ſeeking pleaſure he embraced a leſs pleaſing enjoyment, in place of one more delightful, he may be ſenſible of miſtake or misfortune, but he has nothing at all of the feeling of blame or ſelf-condemnation; but when he hath done an immoral action, he has an inward remorſe, and feels that he has broken a law, and that he ought to have done otherwiſe.

LECTURE IV.

THIS therefore lays us under the neceſſity of ſearching a little further for the principle of moral action. In order to do this with the greater accuracy, and give you a view of the chief controverſies on this ſubject, obſerve, that there are really three queſtions upon it, which muſt be inquired into, and diſtinguiſhed. I am ſenſible, they are ſo intimately connected, that they are ſometimes neceſſarily intermixed; but at others, not diſtinguiſhing, leads into error. The queſtions relate to

1. The nature of virtue.
2. The foundation of virtue.
3. The obligation of virtue.

When we inquire into the nature of virtue, we do enough, when we point out what it is, or ſhow how we may come to the knowledge of every particular duty, and be able to diſtinguiſh it from the oppoſite vice. When we ſpeak of the foundation of virtue, we aſk or anſwer the queſtion, Why is it ſo? Why is this courſe of action preferable to the contrary? What is its excellence? When we ſpeak of the obligation of virtue, we aſk by what law we are bound, or from what principles we ought to be obedient to the precepts which it contains or preſcribes.

After ſpeaking ſomething to each of theſe—to the controverſies that have been raiſed upon them—and the propriety or importance of entering far into theſe controverſies, or a particular deciſion of them, I ſhall proceed to

a detail of the moral laws or the ſeveral branches of duty according to the diviſion firſt laid down.

1. As to the nature of virtue, or what it is; or, in other words, what is the rule by which I muſt try every diſputed practice—that I may keep clear of the next queſtion, you may obſerve, that upon all the ſyſtems they muſt have recourſe to one or more of the following, viz. Conſcience, reaſon, experience. All who found virtue upon affection, particularly Hutchinſon, Shaftſbury and their followers, make the moral ſenſe the rule of duty, and very often attempt to exclude the uſe of reaſon on this ſubject. Theſe authors ſeem alſo to make benevolence and public affection the ſtandard of virtue, in diſtinction from all private and ſelfiſh paſſions.

Doctor Clark and moſt Engliſh writers of the laſt age, make reaſon the ſtandard of virtue, particularly as oppoſed to inward ſentiment or affection. They have this to ſay particularly in ſupport of their opinion, that reaſon does in fact often controul and alter ſentiment; whereas ſentiment cannot alter the clear deciſions of reaſon. Suppoſe my heart dictates to me any thing to be my duty, as for example, to have compaſſion on a perſon detected in the commiſſion of crimes; yet if, upon cool reflection, I perceive that ſuffering him to go unpuniſhed will be hurtful to the community, I counteract the ſentiment from the deductions of reaſon.

Again: Some take in the aid of experience, and chiefly act upon it. All particularly who are upon the ſelfiſh ſcheme, find it neceſſary to make experience the guide, to ſhow them what things are really conducive to happineſs and what not.

We ſhall proceed to conſider the opinions upon the nature of virtue, the chief of which are as follow:

1. Some ſay that virtue conſiſts in acting agreeably to the nature and reaſon of things. And that we are to abſtract from all affection, public and private, in determining any queſtion upon it. Clark.

2. Some ſay that benevolence or public affection is virtue, and that a regard to the good of the whole is the ſtandard of virtue. What is moſt remarkable in this

ſcheme is, that it makes the ſenſe of obligation in particular inſtances give way to a ſuppoſed greater good. Hutchinſon.

3. One author (Wolliſton Rel. of Nat. delineated) makes truth the foundation of virtue, and he reduces the good or evil of any action to the truth or falſhood of a propoſition. This opinion differs not in ſubſtance, but in words only from Dr. Clark's.

4. Others place virtue in ſelf-love, and make a well regulated ſelf-love the ſtandard and foundation of it. This ſcheme is beſt defended by Dr. Campbell, of St. Andrews.

5. Some of late have made ſympathy the ſtandard of virtue, particularly Smith in his Theory of Moral Sentiments. He ſays we have a certain feeling, by which we ſympathize, and as he calls it, go along with what appears to be right. This is but a new phraſeology for the moral ſenſe.

6. David Hume has a ſcheme of morals that is peculiar to himſelf. He makes every thing that is *agreeable* and *uſeful* virtuous, and vice verſa, by which, he entirely annihilates the difference between natural and moral qualities, making health, ſtrength, cleanlineſs, as really virtues as integrity and truth.

7. We have an opinion publiſhed in this country, that virtue conſiſts in the love of being as ſuch.

Several of theſe authors do eaſily and naturally incorporate piety with their ſyſtem, particularly Clark, Hutchinſon, Campbell and Edwards.

And there are ſome who begin by eſtabliſhing natural religion, and then found virtue upon piety. This amounts to the ſame thing in ſubſtance; for reaſoners upon the nature of virtue only mean to ſhow what the Author of nature has pointed out as duty. And after natural religion is eſtabliſhed on general proofs, it will remain to point out what are its laws, which, not taking in revelation, muſt bring us back to conſider our own nature, and the rational deductions from it.

2. The opinions on the foundation of virtue may be ſummed up in the four following:

1. The will of God. 2. The reaſon and nature of things. 3. The public intereſt. 4. Private intereſt.

1. The will of God. By this is not meant what was mentioned above, that the intimations of the divine will point out what is our duty; but that the reaſon of the difference between virtue and vice is to be ſought no where elſe than in the good pleaſure of God. That there is no intrinſic excellence in any thing but as he commands or forbids it. They pretend that if it were otherwiſe, there would be ſomething above the Supreme Being, ſomething in the nature of things that would lay him under the law of neceſſity or fate. But notwithſtanding the difficulty of our forming clear conceptions on this ſubject, it ſeems very harſh and unreaſonable to ſay that the difference between virtue and vice is no other than the divine will. This would be taking away the moral character even of God himſelf. It would not have any meaning then to ſay he is infinitely holy and infinitely perfect. But probably thoſe who have aſſerted this, did not mean any more than that the divine will is ſo perfect and excellent, that all virtue is reduced to conformity to it——and that we ought not to judge of good and evil by any other rule. This is as true as that the divine conduct is the ſtandard of wiſdom.

2. Some found it in the reaſon and nature of things. This may be ſaid to be true, but not ſufficiently preciſe and explicit. Thoſe who embrace this principle ſucceed beſt in their reaſoning when endeavoring to ſhow that there is an eſſential difference between virtue and vice. But when they attempt to ſhow wherein this difference doth or can conſiſt, other than public or private happineſs, they ſpeak with very little meaning.

3. Public happineſs. This opinion is that the foundation of virtue, or that which makes the diſtinction between it and vice, is its tendency to promote the general good; ſo that utility at bottom is the principle of virtue, even with the great patrons of diſintereſted affection.

4. Private happineſs. Thoſe who chooſe to place the foundation of virtue here, would have us to conſider no

other excellence in it than what immediately conduces to our own gratification.

Upon theſe opinions I would obſerve, that there is ſomething true in every one of them, but that they may be eaſily puſhed to an error by exceſs.

The nature and will of God is ſo perfect as to be the true ſtandard of all excellence, natural and moral: and if we are ſure of what he is or commands, it would be preſumption and folly to reaſon againſt it, or put our views of fitneſs in the room of his pleaſure; but to ſay that God, by his will, might have made the ſame temper and conduct virtuous and excellent, which we now call vicious, ſeems to unhinge all our notions of the ſupreme excellence even of God himſelf.

Again, there ſeems to be in the nature of things an intrinſic excellence in moral worth, and an indelible impreſſion of it upon the conſcience, diſtinct from producing or receiving happineſs, and yet we cannot eaſily illuſtrate its excellence but by comparing one kind of happineſs with another.

Again, promoting the public or general good ſeems to be ſo nearly connected with virtue, that we muſt neceſſarily ſuppoſe that univerſal virtue could be of univerſal utility. Yet there are two exceſſes to which this has ſometimes led.—One the fataliſt and neceſſitarian ſchemes, to which there are ſo many objections, and the other, the making the general good the ultimate practical rule to every particular perſon ſo that he may violate particular obligations with a view to a more general benefit.

Once more, it is certain that virtue is as really connected with private as with public happineſs, and yet to make the intereſt of the agent the only foundation of it, ſeems ſo to narrow the mind, and to be ſo deſtructive to the public and generous affections, as to produce the moſt hurtful effects.

If I were to lay down a few propoſitions on the foundation of virtue, as a philoſopher, they ſhould be the following?

1. From reaſon, contemplation, ſentiment and tradition, the Being and infinite perfection and excellence of God may be deduced; and therefore what he is, and commands, is virtue and duty. Whatever he has implanted in uncorrupted nature as a principle, is to be received as his will. Propenſities reſiſted and contradicted by the inward principle of conſcience, are to be conſidered as inherent or contracted vice.

2. True virtue certainly promotes the general good, and this may be made uſe of as an argument in doubtful caſes, to determine whether a particular principle is right or wrong, but to make the good of the whole our immediate principle of action, is putting ourſelves in God's place, and actually ſuperſeding the neceſſity and uſe of the particular principles of duty which he hath impreſſed upon the conſcience. As to the whole, I believe the univerſe is faultleſs and perfect, but I am unwilling to ſay it is the *beſt* poſſible ſyſtem, becauſe I am not able to underſtand ſuch an argument, and becauſe it ſeems to me abſurd that infinite perfection ſhould exhauſt or limit itſelf by a created production.

3. There is in the nature of things a difference between virtue and vice, and however much virtue and happineſs are connected by the divine law, and in the event of things, we are made ſo as to feel towards them, and conceive of them, as diſtinct. We have the ſimple perceptions of duty and intereſt.

4. Private and public intereſt may be promoted by the ſame means, but they are diſtinct views; they ſhould be made to aſſiſt, and not deſtroy each other.

The reſult of the whole is, that we ought to take the rule of duty from conſcience enlightened by reaſon, experience, and every way by which we can be ſuppoſed to learn the will of our Maker, and his intention in creating us ſuch as we are. And we ought to believe that it is as deeply founded as the nature of God himſelf, being a tranſcript of his moral excellence, and that it is productive of the greateſt good.

LECTURE V.

3. IT remains only that we ſpeak of the obligation of virtue, or what is the law that binds us to the performance, and from what motives or principles we ought to follow its dictates.

The ſentiments upon this ſubject differ, as men have different views of the nature and foundation of virtue, yet they may be reduced within narrower bounds.

The obligation of virtue may be eaſily reduced to two general kinds, duty and intereſt. The firſt, if real, implies that we are under ſome law, or ſubject to ſome ſuperior, to whom we are accountable. The other only implies that nature points it out to us as our own greateſt happineſs, and that there is no other reaſon why we ought to obey.

Now I think it is very plain that there is more in the obligation of virtue, than merely our greateſt happineſs. The moral ſentiment itſelf implies that it is duty, independent of happineſs. This produces remorſe and diſapprobation, as having done what is blameable and of ill deſert. We have two ideas very diſtinct, when we ſee a man miſtaking his own intereſt and not obtaining ſo much happineſs as he might, and when we ſee him breaking through every moral obligation. In the firſt caſe we conſider him as only accountable to himſelf, in the ſecond we conſider him as accountable to ſome ſuperior, and to the public. This ſenſe of duty is the primary notion of law and of rights, taken in their moſt extenſive ſignification, as including every thing we think we are entitled to expect from others, and the neglect or violation of which we conſider as wrong, unjuſt, vicious, and therefore blameable. It is alſo affirmed with great apparent reaſon by many, particularly Butler in his Analogy and his ſermons, that we have a natural feeling of ill deſert, and merited puniſhment in vice. The patrons of the ſelfiſh ideas alone, are thoſe who confine the obligation of virtue to happineſs.

But of thoſe who are, or would be thought of the oppoſite ſentiment, there are ſome who differ very conſiderably from others. Some who profeſs great oppoſition to the ſelfiſh ſcheme, declare alſo great averſion to founding the obligation of virtue in any degree on the will of a ſuperior, or looking for any ſanction of puniſhment, to corroborate the moral laws. This they eſpecially treat with contempt, when it is ſuppoſed to be from the deity. Shaftſbury ſpeaks with great bitterneſs againſt taking into view a future ſtate of what he calls more extended ſelf-intereſt. He ſays men ſhould love virtue for its own ſake, without regard to reward or puniſhment. In this he has been followed by many reaſoners, as far as their regard to religion would permit them.

If however, we attend to the dictates of conſcience, we ſhall find evidently, a ſenſe of duty, of ſelf-approbation and remorſe, which plainly ſhow us to be under a law, and that law to have a ſanction: what elſe is the meaning of the fear and terror, and apprehenſion of guilty perſons? Quorum mentes ſi recludantur, &c. ſays Cicero.

Nor is this all, but we have all certainly a natural ſenſe of dependance. The belief of a divine being is certainly either innate and neceſſary, or has been handed down from the firſt man, and can now be well ſupported by the cleareſt reaſon. And our relation to him not only lays the foundation of many moral ſentiments and duties, but completes the idea of morality and law, by ſubjecting us to him, and teaching us to conceive of him, not only as our Maker, preſerver and benefactor, but as our righteous governor and ſupreme judge. As the being and perfections of God are irrefragably eſtabliſhed, the obligation of duty muſt ultimately reſt here.

It ought not to be forgotten that the belief or apprehenſion of a future ſtate of rewards and puniſhments, has been as univerſal as the belief of a deity, and ſeems inſeparable from it, and therefore muſt be conſidered as the ſanction of the moral law. Shaftſbury inveighs ſeverally againſt this, as making man virtuous from a mercenary view; but there are two ways in which we may conſider

this matter, and in either light his objections have little force. (1.) We may conſider the primary obligations of virtue as founded upon a ſenſe of its own excellence, joined with a ſenſe of duty and dependance on the Supreme being, and rewards and puniſhments as a ſecondary motive, which is found in fact, to be abſolutely neceſſary to reſtrain or reclaim men from vice and impiety. Or (2.) We may conſider that by the light of nature, as well as by revelation, the future reward of virtue is conſidered as a ſtate of perfect virtue, and the happineſs is repreſented as ariſing from this circumſtance. Here there is nothing at all of a mercenary principle, but only an expectation that true goodneſs, which is here in a ſtate of imperfection and liable to much oppoſition, ſhall then be improved to the higheſt degree, and put beyond any poſſibility of change.

We may add to theſe obligations the manifeſt tendency of a virtuous conduct to promote even our preſent happineſs: this, in ordinary caſes, it does, and when joined with the ſteady hope of futurity, does in all caſes produce a happineſs ſuperior to what can be enjoyed in the practice of vice. Yet perhaps, the ſtoics of old, who denied pain to be any evil, and made the wiſe man ſuperior to all the viciſſitudes of fortune, carried things to a romantic and extravagant height. And ſo do ſome perſons in modern times, who ſetting aſide the conſideration of a future ſtate, teach that virtue is its own reward. There are many ſituations in which, if you deprive a good man of the hope of future happineſs, his ſtate ſeems very undeſirable. On the contrary, ſometimes the worſt of men enjoy proſperity and ſucceſs to a great degree, nor do they ſeem to have any ſuch remorſe, as to be an adequate puniſhment of their crimes. If any ſhould inſiſt, that a good man has always ſome comfort from within, and a bad man a ſelf-diſapprobation and inward diſquiet, ſuited to their characters, I would ſay that this ariſes from the expectation of a future ſtate, and a hope on the one ſide, and fear on the other, of their condition there.

Thoſe who declaim ſo highly of virtue being its own reward in this life, take away one of the moſt conſiderable

arguments, which from the dawn of philoſophy, has always been made uſe of, as a proof of a future ſtate, viz. the unequal diſtribution of good and evil in this life. Beſides they do not ſeem to view the ſtate of bad men properly. When they talk of remorſe of conſcience, as a ſufficient puniſhment, they forget that this is ſeldom to a high degree, but in the caſe of ſome groſs crimes. Cruelty and murder, frequent acts of groſs injuſtice, are ſometimes followed with deep horror of conſcience; and a courſe of intemperance or luſt is often attended with ſuch diſmal effects upon the body, fame and fortune, that thoſe who ſurvive it a few years, are a melancholy ſpectacle, and a burden to themſelves and others. But it would be very looſe morality, to ſuppoſe none to be bad men, but thoſe who were under the habitual condemnation of conſcience. On the contrary, the far greater part are blinded in their underſtandings, as well as corrupt in their practice—They deceive themſelves, and are at peace. Ignorance and inattention keep the multitude at peace. And falſe principles often produce ſelf-juſtification and ill-founded peace, even in atrocious crimes. Even common robbers are ſometimes found to juſtify themſelves, and ſay—I muſt live—I have a right to my ſhare of proviſion, as well as that proud fellow that rolls in his chariot.

The reſult of the whole is, that the obligation to virtue ought to take in all the following particulars: A ſenſe of its own intrinſic excellence—of its happy conſequences in the preſent life—a ſenſe of duty and ſubjection to the Supreme Being—and a hope of future happineſs, and fear of future miſery from his deciſion.

Having conſidered the reaſonings on the nature, foundation and obligation of virtue, I now proceed to a more particular detail of the moral laws, and ſhall take them under the three heads formerly mentioned, Ethics, Politics and Juriſprudence.

LECTURE VI.

AS to the firſt we muſt begin with what is uſually called the ſtates of man, or the ſeveral lights or relations in which he may be conſidered, as laying a foundation for duty. Theſe ſtates may be divided into two kinds—(1.) Natural. (2.) Adventitious.

The natural ſtates may be enumerated thus: (1.) His ſtate with regard to God, or natural relation to him. (2.) To his fellow-creatures. (3.) Solitude or ſociety. (4.) Peace or war. Perhaps we may add to theſe (5.) His outward proviſion, plenty or want.

Theſe are called natural ſtates, becauſe they are neceſſary and univerſal. All men and at all times are related to God. They were made by him, and live by his providence. We muſt alſo neceſſarily know our fellow-creatures, and their ſtate to be ſimilar to ours in this reſpect and many others. A man muſt at all times be independent or connected with ſociety—at peace with others, or at war—well provided, or in want.

The other ſtates are called adventitious, becauſe they are the effect of choice and the fruit of induſtry, as marriage—family—maſter and ſervant—particular voluntary ſocieties—callings or profeſſions—characters or abilities natural and acquired—offices in a conſtituted ſociety—property, and many particular modifications of each of theſe.

In proſecuting the ſubject farther, and giving an analyſis of the moral duties founded upon theſe ſtates, I ſhall firſt take notice of our relation to God, with the proofs of his being and perfections, and then conſider the moral laws under three heads; our duty to God, to our neighbor, and to ourſelves.

1. Our duty to God. To this place I have reſerved what was to be ſaid upon the proof of the being of God, the great foundation of all natural religion; without which the moral ſenſe would be weak and inſufficient.

The proofs of the being of God are generally divided into two kinds. (1.) A priori. (2.) A poſteriori. The firſt is, properly ſpeaking, metaphyſical reaſoning downward from the firſt principles of ſcience or truth, and inferring by juſt conſequence the being and perfections of God. Clark's Demonſtration, &c. (if there be any thing that ſhould be called a priori, and if this is a concluſive method of reaſoning) is as complete as any thing ever publiſhed, perhaps he has carried the principle as far as it will go.

This way of arguing begins by eſtabliſhing our own exiſtence from conſciouſneſs. That we are not neceſſarily exiſtent, therefore muſt have a cauſe; that ſomething muſt have exiſted from all eternity, or nothing ever could have exiſted; that this being muſt exiſt by an internal neceſſity of nature; that what exiſts neceſſarily muſt exiſt alike every where; muſt be perfect; act every where; be independent, omnipotent, omniſcient, infinitely good, juſt, true—Becauſe as all theſe are evidently perfections or excellencies, that which exiſts by a neceſſity of nature muſt be poſſeſſed of every perfection. And the contrary of theſe virtues implying weakneſs or inſufficiency, cannot be found in the infinite being.

The other medium of proof, commonly called a poſteriori, begins with contemplating the univerſe in all its parts; obſerving that it contains many irreſiſtible proofs that it could not be eternal, could not be without a cauſe; that this cauſe muſt be intelligent; and from the aſtoniſhing greatneſs, the wonderful adjuſtment and complication of things, concludes that we can ſet no bounds to the perfection of the Maker, becauſe we can never exhauſt the power, intelligence and benignity that we ſee in his works. In this way of arguing we deduce the moral perfections of the deity from the faint reſemblances of them that we ſee in ourſelves. As we neceſſarily conceive juſtice, goodneſs, truth, &c. to be perfections or excellencies, we are warranted by the plaineſt reaſon to aſcribe them to the divine being in an infinite degree.

There is perhaps at bottom no difference between theſe ways of reaſoning, becauſe they muſt in ſome degree,

reſt upon a common principle, viz, that every thing that exiſts muſt have a cauſe. This is equally neceſſary to both the chains of reaſoning, and muſt itſelf be taken for an original ſentiment of nature, or an impreſſion neceſſarily made upon us from all that we ſee and are converſant with. About this and ſome other ideas great ſtir has been made by ſome infidel writers, particularly David Hume, who ſeems to have induſtriouſly endeavored to ſhake the certainty of our belief upon cauſe and effect, upon perſonal identity and the idea of power. It is eaſy to raiſe metaphyſical ſubtleties, and confound the underſtanding on ſuch ſubjects. In oppoſition to this, ſome late writers have advanced with great apparent reaſon, that there are certain firſt principles or dictates of common ſenſe, which are either ſimple perceptions, or ſeen with intuitive evidence. Theſe are the foundation of all reaſoning, and without them, to reaſon is a word without a meaning. They can no more be proved than you can prove an axiom in mathematical ſcience. Theſe authors of Scotland have lately produced and ſupported this opinion, to reſolve at once all the refinements and metaphyſical objections of ſome infidel writers.

There is a different ſort of argument often made uſe of, or brought in aid of the others for the being of God, viz. the conſent of all nations, and the univerſal prevalence of that belief. I know not whether we muſt ſay that this argument reſt alſo upon the principle that nothing can exiſt without a cauſe, or upon the plan juſt now mentioned. If it is an univerſal dictate of our nature, we muſt take it as true immediately, without further examination.

An author I formerly mentioned has ſet this argument in a peculiar light (Dr. Wilſon of Newcaſtle). He ſays that we receive all our knowledge, as philoſophers admit, by ſenſation and reflection. Now, from all that we ſee, and all the reflection and abſtraction upon it we are capable of, he affirms it is impoſſible we could ever form the idea of a ſpirit or a future ſtate. They have, however, been early and univerſal, and therefore muſt have been communicated at firſt, and handed down by information

and inſtruction from age to age. So that unleſs upon the ſuppoſition of the exiſtence of God and his imparting the knowledge of himſelf to men, it is impoſſible that any idea of him could ever have entered into the human mind. There is ſomething ingenious and a good deal of probability in this way of reaſoning.

As to the nature of God, the firſt thing to be obſerved is the unity of God. This is ſufficiently eſtabliſhed upon the reaſonings both a priori and poſteriori. If theſe reaſonings are juſt for the being of God, they are ſtrictly concluſive for the unity of God. There is a neceſſity for the exiſtence of one ſupreme being, the firſt cauſe, but no neceſſity for more; nay, one ſupreme independent being does not admit any more. And when we view the harmony, order and unity of deſign in the created ſyſtem, we muſt be led to the belief of the unity of God.

Perhaps it may be thought an objection to this (eſpecially if we lay any ſtreſs on the univerſal ſentiments of mankind,) that all nations have been ſo prone to the belief and worſhip of a plurality of gods. But this argument is rather ſpecious than ſolid; as however prone men were to worſhip local inferior deities, they ſeem to have conſidered them only as intermediate divinities and interceſſors between them and the ſupreme God.

The perfections of God may be divided into two kinds, *Natural* and *Moral*.

1. The natural perfections of God are ſpirituality, immenſity, wiſdom and power.

We call theſe natural perfections, becauſe they can be eaſily diſtinguiſhed, and in idea at leaſt ſeparated, from goodneſs of diſpoſition. It is highly probable indeed that ſupreme excellence, natural and moral, muſt always reſide in the ſame ſubject, and are truly inſeparable; yet we diſtinguiſh them not only becauſe the ideas are diſtinct, but becauſe they are by no means in proportion to one another in inferior natures. Great powers of mind and perfection of body are often joined to malignity of diſpoſition. It is not ſo however in God; for as his natural perfections are founded on reaſon, ſo his moral excellence

is evidently founded in the moral ſenſe or conſcience which he hath implanted in us.

Spirituality is what we may call the *very nature* of God. It muſt be admitted that we cannot at preſent form any complete or adequate idea of a ſpirit. And ſome, as you have heard formerly, inſiſt that without revelation we could never have acquired the idea of it that we have. Yet there are many who have reaſoned in a very ſtrong and ſeemingly concluſive manner, to ſhow that mind or intelligence muſt be a ſubſtance altogether diſtinct from matter. That all the known properties of matter are incapable of producing thought, as being wholly of a different kind—that matter as ſuch and univerſally, is inert and diviſible; thought or intelligence, active and uncompounded. See the beſt reaſoning on this ſubject in Baxter's Immateriality of the Soul.

Immenſity in the Divine Being is that by which he is every where, and equally preſent. Metaphyſicians, however, differ greatly upon this ſubject. The Carteſians will not admit that place is at all applicable to ſpirits. They ſay it is an idea wholly ariſing from extenſion, which is one of the peculiar and eſſential qualities of matter. The Newtonians, however, who make ſo much uſe of the idea of infinite ſpace, conſider place as eſſential to all ſubſtance, ſpirit as well as matter. The difficulties are great on both ſides. It is hard to conceive of ſpirit at all, ſeparating from it the qualities of matter, and after we have attempted to do ſo, it ſeems to be bringing them back to talk of place. And yet it ſeems not only hard but impoſſible to conceive of any real being without ſuppoſing it in ſome place, and particularly upon the immenſity of the Deity, it ſeems to be putting created ſpirits too much on a level with the infinite ſpirit to deny his immenſity. It is I think certain they are either confined to a place, or ſo limited in their operations as is no way ſo will expreſſed as by ſaying we are here and no where elſe. And in this ſenſe both parties muſt admit the divine immenſity—that his agency is equal, univerſal and irreſiſtible.

Wiſdom is another natural attribute of God, implying infinite knowledge—that all things in all their rela-

tions, all things exiſting, and all things poſſible, are the objects of the divine knowledge. Wiſdom is uſually conſidered as reſpecting ſome end to be attained, and it implies the clear diſcovery of the beſt and moſt effectual means of attaining it.

Power is the being able to do all things without limit or reſtraint. The omnipotence of God is always conſidered as an eſſential perfection, and ſeems to ariſe immediately from creation and providence. It is common to ſay that God can do all things except ſuch as imply a contradiction—ſuch as to make a thing to be and not to be at the ſame time; but this is unneceſſary and fooliſh in the way of an exception, for ſuch things are not the objects of power at all. They are mere abſurdities in our conception, and indeed we may ſay, of our own creation. All things are poſſible with God—nothing can withſtand his power.

LECTURE VII.

2d. THE moral perfections of God are holineſs, juſtice, truth, goodneſs and mercy.

Holineſs is ſometimes taken in a general and comprehenſive ſenſe, as being the aggregate, implying the preſence of all moral excellence; yet it is ſometimes uſed and that both in the ſcripture revelation and by heathen writers as a peculiar attribute. In this limited ſenſe it is extremely difficult to define or explain. Holineſs is that character of God to which veneration, or the moſt profound reverence in us, is the correſpondent affection. It is ſometimes alſo expreſſed by purity, and when we go to form an idea of it, perhaps we can ſcarce ſay any thing better than that it is his being removed at an infinite diſtance from the groſſneſs of material indulgence.

Juſtice is an invariable determination to render to all their due. Juſtice ſeems to be founded on the ſtrong and unalterable perception we have of right and wrong, good and evil, and particularly that the one deſerves reward,

and the other punishment. The internal sanction, or the external and providential sanction of natural laws, point out to us the Justice of God. The chief thing that merits attention upon this subject is the controversy about what is called the vindictive justice of God. That is to say, is there in God, or have we a natural sense of the propriety of, a disposition to inflict punishment, independently of the consequences, viz. the reformation of the offender, or the example of others. This loose moralists often declaim against. Yet it seems plain, that the sense in our minds of good and ill desert, makes guilt the proper object of punishment simply in itself. This may have a relation to general order and the good of the whole, which however is out of our reach.

The truth of God is one of his perfections, greatly insisted upon in Scripture, and an essential part of natural religion. It is inseparable from infinite perfection; for any departure from truth must be considered as arising from weakness or necessity. What end could be served to a self-sufficient and all sufficient being by falsehood or deception?

Goodness in God is a disposition to communicate happiness to others. This is easily understood. The creation is a proof of it—Natural and moral evil no just objection to it, because of the preponderancy of happiness.

Mercy, as distinguished from goodness or benignity, is his being of a placable nature—Ready to forgive the guilty, or to remit deserved punishment. It has been disputed how far mercy or placability is discoverable by reason. It is not mercy or forgiveness, unless it would have been just at the same time to have punished. There are but two ways by which men from reason may infer the attribute of mercy to belong to the Deity. (1) Because we ourselves are sensible of this disposition, and see in it a peculiar beauty. (2) From the forbearance of Providence, that sinners are not immediately overtaken with punishment, but have space given them to repent.—Yet as all the conclusions drawn from these principles must be vague and general, the expectations of the guilty founded upon them, must be very uncertain. We must con-

clude therefore, that however ſtable a foundation there is for the other attributes of God in nature and reaſon, the way in which, and the terms on which, he will ſhew mercy, can be learned from Revelation only.

Having conſidered the being and perfections of God, we proceed to our duty to him.

This may be conſidered in two views, as general and ſpecial. 1. By the firſt I underſtand our duty to obey him and ſubmit to him in all things. This you ſee includes every branch of moral duty to our neighbor and ourſelves, as well as to God, and ſo the particular parts of it will be conſidered afterwards. But in this place, conſidering every good action as an act of obedience to God, we will a little attend to the divine ſovereignty and the foundation of it.

In ſpeaking of the foundation of virtue, I took in a ſenſe of dependance and ſubjection to God.—But as men are not to be deterred from bold inquiries, a further queſtion is raiſed by ſome—what is properly the foundation of the divine dominion? (1) Some found it directly upon Omnipotence. It is impoſſible to reſiſt his power. This ſeems to lay us under a neceſſity, rather than to convince us of duty. We ought however, to think and ſpeak of this ſubject with reverence, and certainly Omnipotence ſeems to oblige us to actual, if it ſhould not bring us to willing obedience. It is ſomewhat remarkable, that in the book of Job, compoſed on purpoſe to reſolve ſome difficulties in providence, where God is brought in as ſpeaking himſelf out of the whirlwind, he makes uſe of no other argument than his tremendous majeſty and irreſiſtible power. Yet to reſt the matter wholly upon this, ſeems much the ſame as founding virtue on mere will;—therefore (2) ſome found the divine dominion on his infinite excellence, they ſay it is the law of reaſon that the wiſeſt ſhould rule, and therefore that infinite perfection is entitled to univerſal ſway. Even this, taken ſeparate and alone, does not ſeem wholly to ſatisfy the mind. If one perſon is wiſer than another, it ſeems reaſonable that the other ſhould learn of him and imitate him; but it ſcarcely ſeems a ſufficient reaſon that

the firſt ſhould have abſolute authority. But perhaps the weakneſs of the argument, taken in this view, may ariſe from the inconſiderable difference between man and man, when compared to the ſuperiority of univerſal and unchangeable perfection. (3) Some found it upon creation. They ſay, that God has an abſolute property in all his creatures, he may therefore do what he will with his own. This no doubt, goes a good way, and carries conſiderable force with it to the mind, the rather that, as you will afterwards ſee, it is ſomething ſimilar to this in us, that lays the foundation of our moſt perfect rights, viz. That the product of our own induſtry is properly at our own diſpoſal.

As upon the foundation of virtue I thought it neceſſary to unite the principles of different writers, ſo upon this ſubject, I think that all the three particulars mentioned, ought to be admitted, as the grounds of the divine dominion. Omnipotence, infinite excellence, and the original production and continual preſervation of all creatures.

2. Our duty to God may be conſidered more ſpecially, as it points out the duties we owe immediately to himſelf.

Theſe may be divided into internal and external.—1ſt. The internal are all included under the three following, love, fear, and truſt.

The love of God, which is the firſt and great duty both of natural and revealed religion, may be explained in a larger and more popular, or in a more preciſe and ſtricter way.

In the firſt, love may be reſolved into the four following acts, (1) eſteem, (2) gratitude, (3) benevolence, (4) deſire.

Theſe four will be found inſeparable from true love; and it is pretty much in the ſame order, that the acts ſucceed one another. Love is founded on eſteem, on the real or ſuppoſed good qualities of the object. You can no more love that which you deſpiſe, than that which you hate. Gratitude is alſo inſeparable from it, to have a lively ſenſe of favors received, and to eſteem them for the ſake of the perſon from whom they came. Benevo-

lence or rejoicing in the happineſs and wiſhing well to the object. And laſtly, a deſire of a place in his eſteem. Whatever we love, we deſire to poſſeſs, as far as it is ſuited to our faculties.

The ſtricter, and more preciſe method of conſidering the love of God, is to divide it into two branches, benevolence and deſire. And indeed our affections to God ſeem to be capable of the ſame diviſion as our affection to our fellow-creatures, benevolent and ſelfiſh. I think it undeniable, that there is a diſintereſted love of God, which terminates directly upon himſelf, without any immediate view to our own happineſs—as well as a diſcovery of our great intereſt in his favor.

The ſecond great duty to God, is fear; but here we muſt carefully diſtinguiſh this affection from one which bears the name, and is different from it—at leaſt in a moral view it is altogether oppoſite.—Dutiful fear is what may be otherwiſe called veneration, and hath for its object the infinity of the divine perfection in general, but particularly his majeſty and greatneſs. The other is merely a fear of evil or puniſhment from him: theſe are called ſometimes a filial and a ſervile fear. The firſt increaſes, as men improve in moral excellence, and the other is deſtroyed. Perfect love caſteth out fear. Perhaps however oppoſite, as they have the ſame name, they may be ſaid to be the ſame natural affection, only as it takes place in innocent or holy, and in guilty creatures. The ſame majeſty of God, which produces veneration in the upright, produces horror and apprehenſion of puniſhment in the guilty.

The third great duty is truſt. This is a continual dependance on God for every thing we need, together with an approbation of, and abſolute reſignation to his providence.

2. The external duties to God, I ſhall briefly paſs over, being only, all proper and natural expreſſions of the internal ſentiments.

It may be proper however, to take notice in general of the worſhip due to God, that whether we conſider the nature of things, or the univerſal practice of mankind, in

all ages, worſhip, and that not only private, but public and ſocial worſhip is a duty of natural religion.

Some of the enemies of revealed religion, have ſpoken with great virulence againſt this, as unreaſonable, and even diſhonorable to the Divine Being. The ſubſtance of what they ſay, is this, that as it would be no part of the character of an eminent and good man, to deſire and take pleaſure in others praiſing him and recounting his good qualities, ſo it is abſurd to ſuppoſe, that the Supreme Being is pleaſed with incenſe, ſacrifices and praiſes. But it ought to be obſerved, that he does not require theſe acts and exerciſes as any gratification to himſelf, but as in themſelves juſt and neceſſary and ſuited to the relation we ſtand in to him, and uſeful for forming our temper and univerſal practice. We ought alſo to remember, that we muſt not immediately and without diſcrimination, reaſon from what would be praiſe and blame-worthy among men, to what would be juſt or unjuſt in God, becauſe the circumſtances are very different. Beſides, though for any man to deſire the applauſe of his fellow-creatures, or be pleaſed with adulation, would be a mean and contemptible character, becauſe indeed there is ſuch unſpeakable imperfection in the beſt of men, yet when any duty or ſentiment is fully and manifeſtly due from man to man, there is nothing improper or diſhonorable in requiring or expecting it. Thus a parent requires reſpect and ſubmiſſion from his children, a maſter from his ſervants; and though the injury is merely perſonal, he thinks himſelf entitled to puniſh every expreſſion of contempt or diſregard. Again, every man who has beſtowed ſignal favours upon another, expects to ſee evidence of a grateful and ſenſible mind, and ſeverely condemns every ſentiment or action that indicates a contrary diſpoſition.

On the whole then, we ſee that if the worſhip of God be what is due from us to him, in conſequence of the relation we ſtand in to him, it is proper and neceſſary that he ſhould require it. To honor God is to honor ſupreme excellence; for him not to expect and demand it, would be to deny himſelf.

One other difficulty I ſhall touch upon a little. It reſpects the duty of prayer; and the objections lie equally againſt it on the footing of natural religion and revealed. The objections are two. (1.) Why does God who perfectly knows all our wants, require and expect prayer before he will ſupply them? To this I would anſwer that he ſupplies great multitudes of our wants without our aſking it; and as to his requiring the duty of prayer, I ſay the ſame thing as of worſhip in general; it is reaſonable and neceſſary to expreſs, and to increaſe upon our minds, a ſenſe of dependance, and thereby lay us under an obligation of properly improving what we receive. (2.) The other obligation is with regard to the force or efficacy of prayer. Why, it is ſaid, ſhould we pray, when the whole ſyſtem of divine providence is fixed and unalterable? Can we poſſibly ſuppoſe that God will change his purpoſes, from a regard to our cries or tears? To this ſome anſwer no otherwiſe than as before, that without having any effect upon the event, it has only an effect upon our minds, in bringing us to a right temper. Dr. Leechman of Glaſgow, in his diſcourſe on prayer, makes no other anſwer to this difficulty. But I think to reſt it here, and admit that it has no influence in the way of cauſality upon the event, would in a great meaſure break the force and fervency of prayer. I would therefore ſay further, that prayer has a real efficacy on the event, and juſt as much as any other ſecond cauſe. The objection ariſes from going beyond our depth, and reaſoning from the unchangeable purpoſe of God to human actions, which is always unjuſt and fallacious.—However unable we may be to explain it, notwithſtanding the fixed plan of Providence, there is a real influence of ſecond cauſes both natural and moral, and I apprehend the connexion between cauſe and effect is ſimilar in both caſes. If it is fixed from eternity that there ſhall be a plentiful crop upon a certain field, I know that nothing whatſoever can prevent it, if otherwiſe, the efforts of the whole creation cannot produce it; yet I know as certainly that, hypothetically, if it is not ploughed and ſown, there will be no grain upon it, and that if it be properly manured and dreſſed, it will probably be fruitful. Thus in moral mat-

ters, prayer has as real an influence in procuring the bleſſing, as ploughing and ſowing has in procuring the crop ; and it is as conſiſtent with the eſtabliſhed order of nature and the certainty of events in the one caſe, as in the other : for this reaſon the ſtoical fate of old, was called the *ignava ratio* of the ſtoics, as they ſometimes made uſe of the above fallacious reaſoning.

LECTURE VIII.

2. WE come now to our duty to man. This may be reduced to a ſhort ſum, by aſcending to its principle. Love to others, ſincere and active, is the ſum of our duty.

Benevolence, I formerly obſerved, ought not to be conſidered as the whole of virtue, but it certainly is the principle and ſum of that branch of duty which regards others.

We may diſtinguiſh between (1) particular kind affection, and (2) a calm and deliberate good-will to all.—The particular kind affections, as to family, friends, country, ſeem to be implanted by nature, to ſtrengthen the general principle, for it is only or chiefly by doing good to thoſe we are particularly related to, that we can promote the general happineſs.

Particular kind affections ſhould be reſtrained and directed by a calm good-will to all. Wherever our attachments to private perſons prevents a greater good, they become irregular and exceſſive.

Some think that a calm and ſettled good will to others, is an improvement of the particular affections, and ariſes from the more narrow to the more extenſive ; from family, friends, country, to all our fellow-creatures. But it ſeems more reaſonable to ſay, that the general affection is a dictate of our conſcience of a ſuperior kind. If it were only an increaſe and extenſion of the private affection, it would grow more weak, as the diſtance from ourſelves increaſed, whereas in fact the more enlarged affections are intended to be more powerful than the confined.

When we are ſpeaking of kind affections, it will not be improper to obſerve that ſome unbelievers have objected againſt the goſpel, that it does not recommend private friendſhip and the love of our country. But if fairly conſidered, as the Scripture, both by example and precept, recommends all particular affections, ſo it is to its honor that it ſets the love of mankind above them every one, and by ſo much inſiſting on the forgiveneſs of injuries and the love of enemies, it has carried benevolence to its greateſt perfection. The parable of the Samaritan in anſwer to the queſtion, who is my neighbor? is one of the greateſt beauties in moral painting any where to be ſeen.

The love of our country to be ſure, is a noble and enlarged affection; and thoſe who have ſacrificed private caſe and family relations to it, have become illuſtrious; yet the love of mankind is ſtill greatly ſuperior. Sometimes attachment to country appears in a littleneſs of mind, thinking all other nations inferior, and fooliſhly believing that knowledge, virtue and valor are all confined to themſelves. As the Romans long ago made the *Punica fides* to mean deceit, ſo there are not wanting among us thoſe who think that all the French are intereſted, treacherous and cowardly.

On the great law of love to others, I ſhall only ſay further that it ought to have for its object their greateſt and beſt intereſt, and therefore implies wiſhing and doing them good in ſoul and body.

It is neceſſary now to deſcend to the application of this principle to particular duties, and to examine what are the rights or claims that one man has upon another. Rights and obligations are correlative terms. Whatever others have a juſt right or title to claim from me, that is my duty, or what I am obliged to do to them.

Right in general may be reduced, as to its ſource, to the ſupreme law of moral duty; for whatever men are in duty obliged to do, that they have a claim to, and other men are conſidered as under an obligation to permit them. Again, as our own happineſs is a lawful object or end, we are ſuppoſed to have each a right to proſecute this;

but as our profecutions may interfere, we limit each others rights, and a man is faid to have a right or power to promote his own happineſs only by thoſe means which are not in themſelves criminal or injurious to others.

Rights may be divided or claſſed in ſeveral different ways; an attention to all of which is of uſe on this ſubject. Rights may be (1) natural or acquired. Natural rights are ſuch as are eſſential to man, and univerſal—acquired are thoſe that are the fruits of induſtry, the effects of accident or conqueſt. A man has a natural right to act for his own preſervation, and to defend himſelf from injury, but not a natural right to domineer, to riches (comparatively ſpeaking) or to any particular office in a conſtituted ſtate.

(2.) Rights are conſidered as perfect and imperfect. Thoſe are called perfect rights which can be clearly aſcertained in their circumſtances, and which we may make uſe of force to obtain when they are denied us. Imperfect rights are ſuch as we may demand, and others ought to give us, yet we have no title to compel them. Self-preſervation is a perfect right, but to have a grateful return for a favor is not a perfect right.

All the duties of juſtice are founded on the perfect rights; thoſe of mercy generally on the imperfect rights.

The violation of an imperfect right is often as great an act of immorality as that of a perfect right. It is often as immoral, or more ſo, to refuſe to ſupply the neceſſitous, or to do it too ſparingly, as to commit a ſmall injury againſt a man's perſon or fortune. Yet the laſt is the breach of a perfect right, and the other of an imperfect.

Human laws reach only, in ordinary caſes, to the perfect rights. Sometimes imperfect rights by being carried far become perfect, as humanity and gentleneſs in a parent to a child may be ſo groſsly violated as to warrant the interpoſition of human authority.

(3.) Rights are alienable and unalienable. The firſt we may, according to juſtice and prudence, ſurrender or give up by our own act; the others we may not. A man may give away his own goods, lands, money. There

are ſeveral things which he cannot give away, as a right over his own knowledge, thoughts, &c. Others, which he ought not, as a right to judge for himſelf in all matters of religion, his right to ſelf-preſervation, proviſion, &c. Some ſay that liberty is unalienable, and that thoſe who have even given it away may lawfully reſume it.

The diſtinction between rights as alienable and unalienable is very different from that of natural and acquired. Many of the rights which are ſtrictly natural and univerſal, may be alienated in a ſtate of ſociety for the good of the whole, as well as of private perſons; as for example, the right of ſelf-defence; this is in a great meaſure given up in a ſtate of civil government into the hands of the public—and the right of doing juſtice to ourſelves or to others in matters of property, is wholly given up.

(4.) Rights may be conſidered as they differ with regard to their object. 1. Rights we have over our own perſons and actions. This claſs is called liberty. 2. Rights over things or goods which belong to us: This is called property. 3. Rights over the perſons and actions of other men. This is called authority. 4. Rights in the things which are the property of others, which are of ſeveral ſorts.

When we come to the ſecond great diviſion of moral philoſophy, politics, the above diſtinctions will be more fully explained—at preſent it is ſufficient to point at them in order to ſhow what are the great lines of duty from man to man.

Our duty to others, therefore, may be all comprehended in theſe two particulars, juſtice and mercy.

Juſtice conſiſts in giving or permitting others to enjoy whatever they have a perfect right to—and making ſuch an uſe of our own rights as not to encroach upon the rights of others. There is one writer, David Hume, who has derided the duty of juſtice, reſolving it wholly into power and conveniency, and has affirmed that property is common, than which nothing can be more contrary to reaſon; for if there is any thing clear as a dictate of reaſon, it is, that there are many rights which men ſeverally poſſeſs, which others ought not to violate. The

foundation of property in goods, I will afterwards ſhow you, is plainly laid in the ſocial ſtate.

Another virtue which this author ridicules is chaſtity. This however will be found to be included in juſtice, and to be found in the ſentiments of all nations, and to have the cleareſt foundation both in nature and public utility.

Mercy is the other great branch of our duty to man, and is the exerciſe of the benevolent principle in general, and of the ſeveral particular kind affections. Its acts, generally ſpeaking, belong to the claſs of imperfect rights, which are ſtrongly binding upon the conſcience, and abſolutely neceſſary to the ſubſiſtence of human ſociety; yet ſuch as cannot be enforced with rigor and preciſion by human laws.

Mercy may be generally explained by a readineſs to do all the good offices to others that they ſtand in need of, and are in our power, unleſs they are oppoſed to ſome perfect right, or an imperfect one of greater moment.

LECTURE IX.

3. THE third claſs of moral duties is what contains our duty to ourſelves.

This branch of duty is as real and as much founded in the moral principle, as any of the former—Conſcience as clearly teſtifies the evil of neglecting it—and vicious conduct in this reſpect does generally lead us directly not only to miſery, but to ſhame.

We may, I think, divide our duties to ourſelves into two heads, which will be both diſtinct and comprehenſive, (1.) Self-government. (2.) Self-intereſt.

The firſt of theſe is to keep our thoughts, deſires and affections, in due moderation. If it be aſked what is due moderation, I anſwer it may be diſcovered three ways. (1.) When the indulgence interferes with our duty to God, (2.) To ourſelves, and, (3.) to our neighbor.

When our thoughts or desires are such as to be contrary to the love, fear, or trust we owe to God, then they are to be restrained and brought into subjection—Thus are generated the virtues of *humility contentment*, *patience*, and such as are allied to them.

When our thoughts and inward temper are such as to be any way injurious to others, they must be governed and restrained; hence arises the obligation to guard against all the immoral passions, which will produce meekness and composure of spirit.

And when we have got but a little experience, we shall speedily find that an excessive indulgence of any passion, *love*, *hatred*, *anger*, *fear*, discomposes us exceedingly, and is an evil instead of a blessing. We shall therefore perceive the necessity of continence, self-denial, fortitude, restraint, and moderation in every thing how good soever. (2.) The other general branch of duty to ourselves may be called self-interest. This, taking in natural religion, includes our relation to the Divine Being, and attending particularly to that of procuring his favor. Therefore it is a prime part of our duty to ourselves, to guard against any thing that may be hurtful to our moral character, or religious hopes.

2. We ought to be active and diligent in acquiring every thing necessary for life and comfort. Most of our duties to ourselves, resemble the duties of justice and mercy to others. If there are certain offices due to them, and if they have rights and claims in consequence of their state and relations, the same is the case with ourselves. We are therefore to take all proper methods to preserve and acquire the goods both of mind and body. To acquire knowledge, to preserve health, reputation, possessions.

The whole must be kept within some limits; chiefly we must guard against interfering with the rights of others.

It will be proper before concluding this part of the subject, to take notice of the opinions of the ancients, particularly their enumeration of what are called the cardinal virtues.

Their cardinal virtues were *justice*, *temperance*, *prudence* and *fortitude*. Juſtice included the whole of our duty to our neighbor. Humanity or benevolence you ſee is kept out of view, though a virtue of the firſt claſs; but all its exerciſes are with them ranked under the heads of juſtice; temperance was by them conſidered as much more extenſive than being moderate in the uſe of meats and drink, to which the Engliſh word is chiefly confined. The *Egkrateia* of the Greeks, ſignified not only abſtinence in meats and drink, but continence or purity, and a moderation of all our deſires of whatever kind, of fame and riches, as well as pleaſures. Prudence, even in the way they generally explain it, ſeems ſcarcely to be a moral, or ſo much as a natural quality. Prudence they ſay is taking the wiſeſt courſe to obtain ſome good end. The placing this among the cardinal virtues will ſhow how matters ſtood among them. Great parts or talents were in high eſteem. They did not very fully diſtinguiſh between a good man and a great man. Prudence ſeems rather an embelliſhment of an illuſtrious character, than a moral virtue. Another reaſon why Prudence ſeems to have held ſuch a place among the ancients was, that their chief foundation for virtue was intereſt, or what will produce happineſs. The inquiry upon this ſubject was, what is the ſummum bonum. Now to this, prudence is very neceſſary. Agreeably to all this, they commonly called the virtuous man, the *wise man*, and he was always an hero.

Fortitude is eaſily underſtood, and may be conſidered in two lights, as active and paſſive, which gives the two great virtues of patience and valor.

One of the moſt remarkable qualities in morals among the ancients, was the debate upon the Stoical poſition, that pain is no evil, nor pleaſure any good. This ariſes from comparing external things with the temper of the mind, when it appears without doubt that the latter is of much more conſequence to happineſs than the former. They uſed to reaſon thus,—Outward poſſeſſions when beſtowed upon a bad man, make him no better but worſe, and finally more miſerable. How then can theſe be

goods in themſelves, which become good or evil, according to the ſtate of him that uſes them. They were therefore called the things indifferent. There was ſomething ſtrained and extravagant in ſome of their writings, and perhaps oſtentatious, yet a great deal of true and juſt reaſoning. The moſt beautiful piece of antiquity in the moral way, is the Tablature of Cebes.

Let us now recapitulate what we have gone through, and then add ſome obſervations or corollaries on the morality of actions. We have conſidered,

1. The nature of man.

2. The nature, foundation, and obligation of virtue.

3. Have given a ſort of general analyſis of the moral laws as pointing out our duty to God, to our neighbor, and ourſelves.

We muſt now conſider all morality in general as conformity to a law. We have ſeen above whence this law is collected, and derives its authority. Men may differ, not only as to the foundation but as to the import or meaning of the law in ſome particulars, but it is always ſuppoſed that the law exiſts.

The morality of actions may be conſidered in two different lights, but theſe very nearly related to each other. (1) As they are ranked and diſpoſed of by the law itſelf. (2) in the conformity or oppoſition of the actions to the law.

Under the firſt view an action is either commanded, forbidden or permitted.

Commanded duties oblige abſolutely, and as caſuiſts uſed to ſay, *semper non vero ad semper*, that is to ſay, they are obligatory upon all perſons, at the ſeaſons that are proper for them, but not upon every perſon at every time; becauſe then there could be but one moral duty, all men are obliged to worſhip God, but this only at certain times, other duties have alſo their place and ſeaſon.

Prohibitions oblige *semper et ad semper*, all perſons at all times.—We muſt not lie—this obliges every man at every moment, becauſe no time or circumſtances can make it lawful.

On permiſſion we may obſerve ſeveral things.

1. There is (as ſome ſay,) a two-fold permiſſion, the one full and abſolute, which not only gives us a right to certain things with impunity, but implies a poſitive approbation of the legiſlator, and the other implies only that the action is left at large, being neither commanded nor forbidden.

2. Permiſſion in natural laws always implies the approbation of the legiſlator, and whatever is done in conſequence of it, is innocently done, for God and conſcience do not permit or paſs uncondemned, any bad action.

3. It is otherwiſe in human laws, if they leave any action open, it may be done with impunity, and yet by no means with approbation. I may have a right by human laws to ſay things in a covered or couched manner, which yet may carry in them the higheſt degree of malignity.

4. The truth is, when we conſider the morality of action in a ſtrict or proper manner, the whole claſs of permitted actions vaniſhes. They become by their intention and application either good or bad.

Conſidering actions in their conformity to the laws, a diſtinction ariſes ſimilar to the former, into *good* or juſt, *bad* and indifferent.

A good action muſt be wholly conformable to the law in its ſubſtance, and in all its circumſtances. It is not enough that it be materially good, the time muſt be proper, and the intention laudable.

A bad action is that which, either in ſubſtance or in any circumſtance, is contrary to the law.

In conſequence of this, ſtrictly and properly ſpeaking, all truly good or juſt actions are equally ſo, ariſing from a perfect conformity to the law, as all ſtraight lines are equally ſtraight, but all bad actions are not equally bad, as lines may be bent in a different degree from the ſtraight direction.

Indifferent actions, if there are any truly ſuch) are thoſe that are permitted, and neither commanded nor forbidden by the law, but when we conſider the ſpirit and

principles of true morality, we ſhall find no actions wholly indifferent, becauſe we are under an obligation to promote the happineſs of ourſelves and others, to which every action may be applied immediately or remotely; and ſubjection to the Divine will may make a part of our deſign, in doing or forbearing any thing whatever.

In eſtimating the morality of actions ſeveral circumſtances muſt be conſidered, (1) the good done (2) the principle from which it flows,—ſelf-intereſt of the contracted kind, benevolence or hope of reward. (3) The hindrances or oppoſition that muſt be ſurmounted, as intereſt, inclination, difficulty. An objection ſeems to ariſe from this, not eaſily ſolved. If an action is the more virtuous, the more oppoſition, internal and external, that is overcome, then the longer a man has had the habit of virtue, and the more completely it is formed, the leſs merit in his actions. It ſeems alſo to take away all moral excellence from the Deity, who cannot be ſuppoſed to have the leaſt oppoſition to encounter, either from within or without. This objection cannot be eaſily removed, but by ſaying, that the oppoſition is in no other reſpect an evidence of the good moral temper, but as it ſhows the ſtrength of that inclination that overcomes it, and therefore, when a moral habit is ſo ſtrong as to overcome and annihilate all oppoſition, it is ſo much the more excellent.

An action good in itſelf, may be made criminal by an evil intention.

But no action, in itſelf evil, can be made lawful or laudable by a good intention.

A man is obliged to follow the dictates of conſcience; yet a miſtaken conſcience does not wholly abſolve from guilt, becauſe he ought to have been at more pains to obtain information.

An action is not virtuous in proportion to its oppoſite being vicious. It is no high degree of virtue to love our offspring or provide for a family; but to neglect either is exceedingly vicious.

One phenomenon in human nature, nearly connected with the moral feelings, has been particularly conſidered by ſome writers, viz. that there is ſuch a diſpoſition in the generality of men to croud to ſee objects of diſtreſs, as an extraordinary public execution. What is the deſire that prompts to it? Is the ſight of miſery a pleaſant feeling? Some reſolve it merely into curioſity, which they conſider as a natural and original impreſſion. But there ſeems to be ſomething in it different from novelty. Others ſay it ariſes from benevolence, and is an exerciſe of compaſſion, and that we have a ſtrong natural impulſe to the affection of pity, and really feel a pleaſure in indulging it. But though every well diſpoſed mind is highly ſuſceptible of pity, at leaſt of all the benevolence and help that pity ſuggeſts when the object preſents itſelf, we can ſcarcely ſay that the feeling is pleaſant, or that we have a deſire after ſuch objects, in order to the gratification.

They who reaſon on the ſelfiſh ſcheme, as uſual, reſolve all into private intereſt; they ſay we delight to ſee objects of diſtreſs, becauſe it gives us a ſecret ſatisfaction in reflecting upon our own different ſituation. I believe there is ſuch a ſatisfaction in narrow and contracted minds; but to thoſe tolerably diſpoſed it has an oppoſite effect; it makes them rather conſider the calamities which they themſelves are ſubject to, than thoſe from which they are free.

Perhaps it would be beſt to take more than one principle to account for this effect—curioſity muſt make a part, and probably humanity and compaſſion, alſo contribute to it. It ſeems to be thought ſome little alleviation to the ſufferer's miſery when others pity him—Yet prudent perſons knowing how unavailing this pity is often chooſe to be abſent.

Sympathy is a particular affection in aid of benevolence—Yet like all other private affections, when it is not moderated, it prevents its own effect—One deeply affected with the view of an object of diſtreſs, is often thereby incapacitated to aſſiſt him.

Another queſtion is ſometimes ſubjoined to the above, why men have pleaſure in ſeeing Tragedy, which is a ſtri-

king repreſentation of a melancholy cataſtrophe. As far as the ſubject differs from comedy, it may be accounted for on the ſame principles with the deſire to ſee objects of diſtreſs—But one powerful principle leads both to Comedy and Tragedy—a pleaſure in the imitative arts, an exact portrait of any object whatever, gives the higheſt pleaſure, even though the object itſelf were originally terrible or diſguſting.

We ſee plainly, that an indulgence of the pleaſure given by a fine performance, is what crowds the theatre. Unhappily, to give greater pleaſure to a corrupt mind, they often invent ſuch ſcenes, and conduct the matter ſo, as to make the ſtage the greateſt enemy to virtue and good morals.

LECTURE X.

Of Politics.

POLITICS contain the principles of ſocial union, and the rules of duty in a ſtate of ſociety.—This is but another and more complete view of the ſame things, drawn out more fully, and applied to particular caſes. Political law is the authority of any ſociety ſtampt upon moral duty.

The firſt thing to be conſidered, in order to ſee upon what principles ſociety is formed, is the ſtate immediately previous to the ſocial ſtate. This is called the ſtate of nature—Violent and unneceſſary controverſies have been made on that ſubject. Some have denied that any ſuch thing ever exiſted, that ſince there were men, they have always been in a ſocial ſtate. And to be ſure, this is ſo far true, that in no example or fact, could it ever laſt long. Yet it is impoſſible to conſider ſociety as a voluntary union of particular perſons, without ſuppoſing thoſe perſons in a ſtate ſomewhat different, before this union took place—There are rights therefore belonging to a ſtate of nature, different from thoſe of a ſocial ſtate.

And diſtinct ſocieties or ſtates independent, are at this moment in a ſtate of nature, or natural liberty, with regard to each other.

Another famous queſtion has been, Is the ſtate of nature a ſtate of war or peace? Hobbes, an author of conſiderable note, but of very illiberal ſentiments in politics, is a ſtrenuous advocate for a ſtate of nature being a ſtate of war. Hutchinſon and Shaftſbury plead ſtrongly, that a ſtate of nature is a ſtate of ſociety. However oppoſite and hoſtile their opinions ſeems to be with regard to each other, it ſeems no hard matter to reconcile them. That the principles of our nature lead to ſociety—that our happineſs and the improvement of our powers are only to be had in ſociety, is of the moſt undoubted certainty—and that in our nature, as it is the work of God, there is a real good-will and benevolence to others: but on the other hand, that our nature as it is now, when free and independent, is prone to injury, and conſequently to war, is equally manifeſt, and that in a ſtate of natural liberty, there is no other way but force, for preſerving ſecurity and repelling injury. The inconveniences of the natural ſtate are very many.

One claſs of the above-mentioned writers ſay, that nature prompts to ſociety, and the other, that neceſſity and intereſt obliges to it—both are equally true.

Suppoſing then the ſtate of natural liberty antecedent to ſociety to be a reality, let us conſider the perfect and imperfect rights belonging to that ſtate, that we may ſee more diſtinctly how, and why they differ in a ſocial ſtate.

The perfect rights in a ſtate of natural liberty, are, (1.) a right to life. (2.) A right to employ his faculties and induſtry for his own uſe. (3.) A right to things that are common and neceſſary, as air, water, earth. (4.) A right to perſonal liberty. (5.) A power over his own life, not to throw it away unneceſſarily, but for a good reaſon. (6.) A right of private judgment in matters of opinion. (7.) A right to aſſociate, if he ſo incline, with any perſon or perſons, whom he can perſuade (not force)—Under this is contained the right to marriage. (8.) A right to character, that is to ſay, innocence (not fame)—It is eaſy

to perceive that all theſe rights belong to a ſtate of natural liberty, and that it would be unjuſt and unequal for any individual to hinder or abridge another in any one of them, without conſent, or unleſs it be in juſt retaliation for injury received.

The imperfect natural rights are very numerous, but they are nearly the ſame in a ſtate of nature as in a ſtate of ſociety, as gratitude, compaſſion, mutual good offices—if they will be no injury to the perſon performing them—Indeed they muſt be the ſame in a natural and in a ſocial ſtate, becauſe the very definition of an imperfect right is ſuch as you cannot uſe force to obtain. Now, what you ought not to uſe force to obtain in a ſtate of natural liberty, human laws in a well conſtituted ſtate will not give you.

Society I would define to be an aſſociation or compact of any number of perſons, to deliver up or abridge ſome part of their natural rights, in order to have the ſtrength of the united body, to protect the remaining, and to beſtow others.

Hobbes and ſome other writers of the former age, treat with great contempt, this which is generally called the ſocial compact.—He inſiſts that monarchy is the law of nature. Few are of his ſentiments now, at leaſt in Britain, yet it is proper to trace them to the foundation.

It is to be admitted, that ſociety began firſt inſenſibly by families, and almoſt neceſſarily. Hence parental authority was the firſt law, and perhaps it extended for two or three generations in the early ages. Though the patrons of monarchy uſe this as an argument, it does not favor their ſcheme—This which they call the patriarchal government, could not extend far ; or ſuppoſing it could, there would be but one rightful king in all the earth, the lineal deſcendant of Adam's eldeſt ſon, not to mention that the very order of ſucceſſion in hereditary right, has never been uniform, and is but of late, ſettled in the European nations.

The truth is, though man for wiſe reaſons, afterwards to be noticed, continues longer in a family dependance, than other animals, yet in time he becomes ſui juris, and when their numbers are increaſed, when they either con-

tinue together, or remove and form diſtinct ſocieties, it is plain that there muſt be ſuppoſed an expreſſed or implied contract.

Some ſay there is no trace or record of any ſuch contract in the beginning of any ſociety. But this is no argument at all, for things inſeparable from, and eſſential to any ſtate, commonly take place ſo inſenſibly, that their beginning is not obſerved.

When perſons believe themſelves upon the whole, rather oppreſſed than protected in any ſociety, they think they are at liberty, either to rebel againſt it, or fly from it; which plainly implies that their being ſubject to it, aroſe from a tacit conſent.

Beſides in migrations and planting of colonies, in all ages, we ſee evident traces of an original contract and conſent taken to the principles of union.

From this view of ſociety as a voluntary compact, reſults this principle, that men are originally and by nature equal, and conſequently free.

Liberty either cannot, or ought not to be given up in the ſocial ſtate—The end of the union ſhould be the protection of liberty, as far as it is a bleſſing. The definition of liberty in a conſtituted government, will be afterwards explained.

Some obſerve, that few nations or ſocieties in the world have had their conſtitutions formed on the principles of liberty: perhaps not one twentieth of the ſtates that have been eſtabliſhed ſince the beginning of the world have been ſettled upon principles altogether favorable to liberty. This is no juſt argument againſt natural liberty and the rights of mankind; for it is certain, that the public good has always been the real aim of the people in general, in forming and entering into any ſociety. It has alſo conſtantly been at leaſt the profeſſed aim of legiſlators. Therefore the principle ſeems to have been admitted, only they have failed or been diſappointed in practice, by miſtake or deceit. Though perhaps not one twentieth part of mankind have any tolerable ſkill in the fine arts, it does not follow that there are no ſuch arts, or that the principles of them are not founded in nature.

Reaſon teaches natural liberty, and common utility recommends it. Some nations have ſeen this more clearly than others, or have more happily found the means of eſtabliſhing it.

Here perhaps we ſhould conſider a little the queſtion, whether it is lawful to make men or to keep them ſlaves, without their conſent? This will fall afterwards to be conſidered more fully: in the mean time, obſerve that in every ſtate there muſt be ſome ſuperior and others inferior, and it is hard to fix the degree of ſubjection that may fall to the lot of particular perſons. Men may become ſlaves, or their perſons and labor be put wholly in the power of others by conſent. They may alſo ſometimes in a conſtituted ſtate, be made ſlaves by force, as a puniſhment for the commiſſion of crimes. But it is certainly unlawful to make inroads upon others, unprovoked, and take away their liberty by no better right than ſuperior power.

It has ſometimes been doubted, whether it is lawful to take away the liberty of others for life, even on account of crimes committed. There can be no ſtrong reaſon given againſt this, except that which is ſuppoſod to operate in Great Britain againſt making malefactors ſlaves, that it would be unfavorable to rational liberty to ſee any rank of men in chains. But ſetting this aſide, it ſeems plain that if men may forfeit their lives to the ſociety, they may alſo forfeit their liberty, which is a leſs precious bleſſing. It ſeems alſo more agreeable both to equity and public utility to puniſh ſome ſort of crimes, with hard labor, than death. Impriſonment for life, has been admitted and practiſed by all nations—Some have pleaded for making ſlaves of the barbarous nations, that they are actually brought into a more eligible ſtate, and have more of the comforts of life, than they would have had in their own country. This argument may alleviate, but does not juſtify the practice. It cannot be called a more eligible ſtate, if leſs agreeable to themſelves.

Upon the whole, there are many unlawful ways of making ſlaves, but alſo ſome that are lawful—And the practice ſeems to be countenanced in the law of Moſes, where rules are laid down for their treatment, and an eſtimation

of injuries done to them, different from that of free men. I do not think there lies any neceſſity on thoſe who found men in a ſtate of ſlavery, to make them free to their own ruin. But it is very doubtful whether any original cauſe of ſervitude can be defended, but legal puniſhment for the commiſſion of crimes. Humanity in the manner of treating them is manifeſtly a dictate of reaſon and nature, and I think alſo of private and public utility, as much as of either.

The next ſtep in opening the principles of the ſocial ſtate, is to conſider the foundation, eſtabliſhment and extent of *Property*. Some begin this by conſidering the property of man in general, in the inferior creatures. Has he any right to uſe the lower irrational animals for labour, or food, or both?

It is needleſs to refine too much upon this ſubject. To uſe them for labor ſeems evidently lawful, as they are inferior, with ſtrength fitted for it, and ſtrength which they could not employ for the improvement and cultivation of the earth without the direction of man. They ſeem to be to man, ſome how as the body to the mind. They help to produce food for themſelves and ſo increaſe their number and receive much more ſenſual pleaſure, ſharing in all reſpects with their maſters the fruit of their toil.

To uſe them for food is thus argued to be lawful.—If ſuffered all to live, they would become too numerous, and could not be ſuſtained, ſo that death to many of them in a much worſe way muſt be the certain conſequence. Further, nature ſeems to dictate the uſe of them for food in the plaineſt manner, for they are food for one another in a regular gradation, the inſect to the birds and fiſhes, many of them to the beaſts, and the ſmaller to the greater, or the tamer to the more rapacious of every order.

If we take tradition or Revelation for our guide, the matter is plain, that God made man lord of the works of his hands, and put under him all the other creatures. Only it appears that the grant of animal food was made no earlier than to Noah after the flood.

Let us next conſider the eſtabliſhment of private property. Private property is every particular perſon's having a confeſſed and excluſive right to a certain portion of the goods which ſerve for the ſupport and conveniency of life.

In a very imperfect ſtate of ſociety community of goods may ſubſiſt in a great degree, and indeed its ſubſiſting is one of the ſureſt ſigns of an imperfect ſtate of ſociety. Some attempts have been made in civilized ſtates to introduce it, but without any conſiderable effect, except in Sparta, the conſtitution of which was very ſingular. In ſmall voluntary ſocieties, eſpecially of the religious kind, it may be eſtabliſhed, and will continue ſo long as the morals of the ſociety are pure. But in civil ſociety fully formed, eſpecially if the ſtate is at all extenſive or intended to be ſo, private property is eſſentially neceſſary, and founded upon the reaſon of things and public utility. The reaſons of it are (1) without private property no laws would be ſufficient to compel univerſal induſtry. There never was ſuch a purity of manners and zeal for the public, in the individuals of a great body, but that many would be idle and ſlothful, and maintain themſelves upon the labor of others.

2. There is no reaſon to expect in the preſent ſtate of human nature, that there would be a juſt and equal diſtribution to every one according to his neceſſity, nor any room for diſtinction according to merit.

3. There would be no place for the exerciſe of ſome of the nobleſt affections of the human mind, as charity, compaſſion, beneficence, &c.

4. Little or no incitement to the active virtues, labor, ingenuity, bravery, patience, &c.

Some have laid down ſchemes for making property common, as Sir Thomas Moore in his Utopia; but in general they are chimerical and impracticable. There is no inſtance in fact where any ſtate that made a figure in the ſocial life, had their goods wholly in common. Sparta had the moſt of it, but it was a very ſmall ſtate, and limited in its views; beſides there was ſomething ſo ſingular in the whole conſtitution of the Spartan government, that its ſub-

ſiſting ſo long, remains a phenomenon for politicians and reaſoners yet to account for.

Suppoſing private property to be eſſential, or at leaſt uſeful in the ſocial ſtate, the next queſtion is, how does this property take its riſe, or by what ways is it acquired.

The original ways of acquiring property may be reduced to theſe two (1) Prior occupation (2) our own induſtry.

As to the firſt of theſe, it may be analyſed thus. Of the things that lay in common for the uſe of man, I have a right to take what is convenient for me, and after I have taken it, no body can have a better right, nor conſequently any title to take it from me.

But many queſtions difficult to be reſolved ariſe from the application of this principle. How far does this right extend? Muſt I take only what is ſufficient for the preſent moment, or may I provide for future neceſſities and enjoyment. In vacant lands muſt I take only what I and my preſent followers can ſufficiently occupy, or may I touch a continent and call it mine, though I ſhall not be able to fill it in many ages. I anſwer common utility muſt be the rule in all theſe caſes, and any thing more particular, muſt be reſerved till we come to the law of nations.

Some ſay that the water in large bays and rivers, ought to be common to all, becauſe it is inexhauſtible, and one's uſing it cannot waſte or ſpoil it for the uſe of others. But the ſecurity of ſocieties will point out the meaſure of property that muſt be in all thoſe things.

The extent or object of property contains three particulars (1) a right to the fulleſt uſe. Whatever is a perſon's property, he has a right to do with it as he pleaſes, with this ſingle exception, if it may be called ſo, that he may not uſe it to the injury of others. Full property has no other exception, unleſs you call this an exception, that if any man would wantonly deſtroy the fruits of the earth, or his habitation; in that caſe though they were his own, people would hinder him, as ſuppoſing him to be mad, and deprive him not only of that liberty, but of all others.

2. Property implies a right of excluſion. We may hinder others from any way intermeddling with what is our property. This ſeems eſſential to the idea. Giving a full right to one, implies that others have none.

3. It implies a power to alienate. That is to ſay, a right of alteration, commutation, donation, during life, and diſpoſal at death. Thus property is ſaid to be perpetual.

There are certain things called by Civilians Res nullius, ſuch as temples, public edifices, gates and walls of cities, &c. Temples uſed to be ſaid to be given to God, and in the laws of civilized ſtates, attention is paid to this circumſtance. But as to the property or uſe, the caſe of them and of all the other things mentioned, is very clear. They are under the inſpection of the magiſtrate, or ſuch perſons as repreſent the community, and are by them kept for common uſe.

LECTURE XI.

IN the ſocial life in general we may conſider, (1) domeſtic, (2) civil ſociety.

The firſt of theſe we muſt conſider as implying and made up of ſeveral relations, the chief of which are (1) the relation of marriage, (2) That of parents and children, (3) that of maſter and ſervant.

In marriage we ought to obſerve that though all creatures may be ſaid to be propagated in a way in a great degree ſimilar, yet there is ſomething peculiarly diſtinguiſhed, dignified and ſolemn, in marriage among men. This diſtinction is neceſſary, and founded in reaſon and nature.

Human creatures at their birth are in a ſtate weaker and more helpleſs than any other animals. They alſo arrive much more ſlowly at maturity, and need by far moſt aſſiſtance and cultivation. Therefore a particular union of the parents is abſolutely neceſſary, and that upon ſuch powerful principles as will ſecure their com-

mon care. Marriage is a relation expreſsly founded upon this neceſſity, and muſt be ſo conducted as to aſcertain the property of the offspring, and to promiſe the moſt aſſiduous, prudent and extenſive care.

This is the foundation of marriage drawn from the public good. But we ought alſo to obſerve that man is manifeſtly ſuperior in dignity to the other animals, and it was intended that all his enjoyments, and even his indulgence of inſtinctive propenſities, ſhould be of a more exalted and rational kind than theirs. Therefore the propenſity of the ſexes to one another, is not only reined in by modeſty, but is ſo ordered as to require that reaſon and friendſhip, and ſome of the nobleſt affections, ſhould have place. And it is certain that they have, if not a more violent, at leaſt a more laſting and uniform influence, in the married ſtate, than ſenſual deſire.

It is further obſerved by moral writers, that though beauty and perſonal attraction may be conſidered as the firſt motives, yet theſe are always ſuppoſed to be indications of ſomething excellent in the temper within. So that even love of beauty, in man, is an attachment to moral excellence. Let a perſon attend with ſerioufneſs and he will find that the utmoſt perfection of form in an idiot, or one thoroughly known to be of a very bad temper, is really no object of deſire. Though in thoſe who are little known, it is apt to prejudice the ignorant and unwary to judge favorably of the perſon.

The particulars which reaſon and nature point out, relating to the marriage contract, are as follow :

1. That it be between one man and one woman. Polygamy is condemned by nature; for it is found that the males born, are to the females as 13 to 12, or as ſome ſay, as 20 to 19, the overplus being to ſupply the greater waſte of the male part of the ſpecies by war and dangerous occupations, hard labor, and travelling by land and ſea.

2. The fundamental and eſſential part of the contract is fidelity and chaſtity. This muſt immediately appear to be eſſential to the purpoſe of the union. Some writers ſay that this is eſpecially binding upon the woman, in order to aſcertain the offspring; but every body muſt ſee

the abſurdity of any diſtinction, becauſe the contract would neither be equal, nor likely to be ſteadily obſerved if it were not mutual. Beſides, as a late author has well obſerved, if chaſtity be a female virtue, how can men be unchaſte without infringing upon it?

3. The contract ſhould be for life—otherwiſe it would be ſhort, uncertain, and mutual love and induſtry greatly weakened.

4. If ſuperiority and authority be given to the man, it ſhould be uſed with ſo much gentleneſs and love as to make it a ſtate of as great equality as poſſible. Hutchinſon and ſome other writers ſay there ſhould be no ſuperiority, and that their property being common, ſhould not be alienated by the one without the other. Others think that perfect equality of power in two perſons is not conſiſtent with order, and the common intereſt, and therefore give authority to the man, and the laws of moſt nations give the man the diſpoſal of property, with the reſervation of particular rights to the woman.

Some heathen writers gave the man power of life and death over the woman, a thing evidently barbarous and unjuſt.

5. Marriages are ſometimes diſſolved by divorces, which our law permits only or three accounts—adultery, wilful and obſtinate deſertion, and incapacity. The firſt two of theſe founded on the New Teſtament, and the laſt on reaſon, being not ſo properly a diſſolution of a marriage, as a declaration that it was void from the beginning, ~~and~~ and never took place.

Some writers of moral philoſophy add as cauſes of divorce, contrariety of temper, incurable diſeaſes, and ſuch as would infect the offspring. But none of them ſeem of ſufficient moment. The firſt would be an evident temptation to cauſeleſs and wanton ſeparations—and all the three may be guarded againſt by previous caution.

Hutchinſon obſerves that in all nations, marrying in near degrees of conſanguinity or affinity has been avoided and abhorred; and he adds, that the natural and general abhorrence of it has been greater than reaſon ſeems to

dictate. Hence it has been conjectured to have been early tradition or revelation—and men have exercised their invention in finding out the true reason or ground of the prohibition.

One reason assigned is, because if marriage were lawful to near relations, their frequent intercourse would be a strong temptation to uncleanness.

Another; that if permitted, it would frequently confound or invert the duties of relations, by setting some above others whom they formerly used to obey.

A third reason, and perhaps the best is, that abstaining from blood relations in this voluntary contract extends the social ties, and produces a greater number of family relations.

Whatever be the moral reasons, it seems to have a strong sanction in nature; for it is observed that marriage between near relations, especially if repeated, greatly weakens the human race.

As to the extent of this prohibition, it has been various in different nations, but the most prevailing has been to forbid all within three degrees. The degrees are reckoned by the steps of descent between the parties and the common parent. Parent and child is the first—child and child, the second—child and grand-child, the third—and two grand-children or first cousins the fourth—when it becomes lawful.

Relation of Parents and Children.

The first thing to be observed is, that this relation is distinguished by the strongest instinct of parental affection. This seems necessary, as the education of children is a duty requiring so much time, care and expence, which nothing but the most rooted affection would submit to.

The rights of the parent may be summed up in these two: 1. Authority, which requires subjection in the children. 2. A right to a grateful return in due time from the children. The first is a perfect right, as far as it extends, but must be limited.

Some nations have given parents the power of life and death over their children, and Hobbes inſiſts that children are the goods and abſolute property of their parents, and that they may alienate them and ſell them either for a time or for life. But both theſe ſeem ill founded, becauſe they are contrary to the end of this right, viz. inſtruction and protection. Parental right ſeems in moſt caſes to be limitted by the advantage of the children.

Children are no doubt to judge for themſelves in matters of religion when they come to years; though the parents are under the ſtrongeſt obligation to inſtruct them carefully to the beſt of their judgment. Thoſe who inſiſt, that to leave them their judgment free they ought not to be taught any principles, ought to conſider that their ſcheme is impracticable and abſurd. If the parents do not inſtruct them, they will imbibe prejudices and contract habits, perhaps of the worſt kind, from others.

Children in moſt nations are conſidered as having a right excluſive of their parents, to property given them by others.

Many nations have given the parents a right to diſpoſe of their children in marriage; but this ſeems to be carrying parental authority too far, if it be made abſolute, becauſe it puts in the power of the parent to diſpoſe of what is moſt eſſential to their happineſs through the whole of their future life. Yet it ſeems very contrary to reaſon and nature, that children in early life ſhould diſpoſe of themſelves in marriage without conſulting their parents.

Since we have denied the power of life and death to parents, it will be aſked what is the ſanction of their authority? I anſwer, moderate correction in early life, and as the very higheſt puniſhment, expulſion from their family, or a forfeiture of the privileges which they deſpiſe.

As to the right to a grateful return, it is an imperfect right, but of the ſtrongeſt kind—ſometimes the civil authority interpoſes, and obliges children to maintain their aged parents.

To the diſgrace of human nature it is often obſerved, that parental affection is much ſtronger than filial duty. We muſt indeed acknowledge the wiſdom of Providence

in making the inſtinctive impulſe ſtronger in parents towards their children, than in children towards their parents; becauſe the firſt is more neceſſary than the other to the public good; yet when we conſider both as improved into a virtuous diſpoſition, by reaſon and a ſenſe of duty, there ſeems to be every whit as much baſeneſs in filial ingratitude, as in want of natural affection.

Relation of Master and Servant.

This relation is firſt generated by the difference which God hath permitted to take place between man and man. Some are ſuperior to others in mental powers and intellectual improvement—ſome by the great increaſe of their property through their own, or their predeceſſors induſtry, and ſome make it their choice, finding they cannot live otherwiſe better, to let out their labor to others for hire.

Let us ſhortly conſider (1.) How far this ſubjection extends. (2.) The duties on each ſide.

As to the firſt it ſeems to be only that the maſter has a right to the labors and ingenuity of the ſervant, for a limited time, or at moſt for life. He can have no right either to take away life, or to make it inſupportable by exceſſive labor. The ſervant therefore retains all his other natural rights.

The practice of ancient nations, of making their priſoners of war ſlaves, was altogether unjuſt and barbarous; for though we could ſuppoſe that thoſe who were the cauſes of an unjuſt war deſerved to be made ſlaves; yet this could not be the caſe of all who fought on their ſide; beſides, the doing ſo in one inſtance, would authoriſe the doing it in any other; and thoſe who fought in defence of their country, when unjuſtly invaded, might be taken as well as others. The practice was alſo impolitic, as ſlaves never are ſo good or faithful ſervants, as thoſe who become ſo for a limited time by conſent.

LECTURE XII.

Of Civil Society.

CIVIL SOCIETY is diſtinguiſhed from domeſtic, in the union of a number of families in one ſtate, for their mutual benefit.

We have before affirmed, that ſociety always ſuppoſes an expreſſed or implied contract or agreement. Let us now ſee what this agreement neceſſarily implies.

(1.) The conſent of every individual to live in, and be a member of that ſociety. (2.) A conſent to ſome particular plan of government. (3.) A mutual agreement between the ſubjects and rulers; of ſubjection on the one hand, of protection on the other—Theſe are all implied in the union of every ſociety, and they compleat the whole.

Any objections that may be raiſed againſt this, are eaſily ſolved. Ex. Gr. Though every individual has not given an actual conſent, yet his determination to live with any ſociety implies it. Again, if it be aſked how children come to be members of a ſociety; it is anſwered, they receive the benefits and partake of the rights of the ſociety during the whole time of their education, and as they come to the uſe of reaſon, they both claim the privilege, and acquieſce in the duty of citizens—And if they find any thing inſupportable in their condition, they may alter it at their pleaſure.

Have then all ſubjects a right when they ſee fit, to remove from the ſociety in which they are? I anſwer that in all ordinary caſes they ought to have, at leaſt in time of peace. Perhaps it may be affirmed with juſtice, that they who have enjoyed the privileges of any ſociety in time of peace, if war or danger to the public ſhould ariſe, they may be hindered from emigrating at that time, and compelled to contribute their ſhare in what is neceſſary to the common defence.

Whatever is the form of government in any ſociety, the members may be divided into two claſſes, the *rulers* and the *ruled*, the magiſtrates and ſubjects.

The rights of rulers may be divided into eſſential and accidental: the eſſential, ſuch as in general muſt be veſted in rulers of every ſociety; the accidental, ſuch as may be given to the rulers in ſome ſocieties, but not in others.

The eſſential rights of rulers, are what require moſt to be enumerated, and theſe again by ſome good writers are divided into greater and leſſer eſſentials.

Of the firſt kind are, (1.) Legiſlation. (2.) Taxation for the public expence. (3.) Juriſdiction, or the adminiſtration of juſtice. (4.) Repreſentation, or appearing and acting in name of the whole, in all tranſactions, with adjacent independent ſtates, chiefly for the purpoſes of making war or peace.

The leſs eſſential rights of rulers are many, and they are called leſs eſſential, becauſe they may be more varied than the others; ſuch as, coining of money—poſſeſſing or managing public edifices—conferring honors on officers, &c.

The rights of ſubjects in a ſocial ſtate, cannot be enumerated, but they may be all ſummed up in *protection*, that is to ſay, thoſe who have ſurrendered part of their natural rights, expect the ſtrength of the public arm to defend and improve what remains.

It has been often ſaid, that government is carried on by rewards and puniſhments; but it ought to be obſerved, that the only reward that a ſtate can be ſuppoſed to beſtow upon good ſubjects in general, is protection and defence. Some few who have diſtinguiſhed themſelves in the public ſervice, may be diſtinguiſhed by particular rewards; but to reward the whole is impoſſible, becauſe the reward muſt be levied from thoſe very perſons to whom it is to be given.

After what has been ſaid on the foundation of ſociety, viz. conſent, perhaps it may be neceſſary to mention two exceptions.

1. It is ſaid by ſome with apparent reaſon, that a few perſons if accidentally armed with power, may conſtrain

a large ignorant rabble to ſubmit to laws which will be for their good. This I would admit in ſome caſes, when there is an evident madneſs and diſorder in the multitude, and when there is a moral certainty that they will afterwards be pleaſed with the violence done them. But in general it is but a bad maxim that we may force people for their good. All lovers of power will be diſpoſed to think that even a violent uſe of it is for the public good.

2. Though people have actually conſented to any form of government, if they have been eſſentially deceived in the nature and operation of the laws, if they are found to be pernicious and deſtructive of the ends of the union, they may certainly break up the ſociety, recall their obligation, and reſettle the whole upon a better footing.

Of the different forms of government.

As ſoon as men began to conſider and compare forms of government, they divided them into three general and ſimple kinds, (1) monarchy, (2) ariſtocracy, (3) democracy. Theſe are called ſimple, becauſe they are clearly diſtinguiſhable from each other in their nature and effects. The ancients generally divided the forms of government in this manner, becauſe moſt of their governments were of one or other of theſe kinds with very little mixture.

Monarchy is when the ſupreme power is veſted in a ſingle perſon. Mr. Hutchinſon ſays, monarchy may be either abſolute or limited; but this is an inaccuracy, for limited monarchy is one of the mixed kinds of government.

But monarchy may be either temporary or for life. The Roman dictators were abſolute for a time, and ſo long as they continued, the government was purely monarchical, all other powers being dormant.

Monarchy may alſo be either hereditary or elective.

Ariſtocracy is that form of government in which the ſupreme power is lodged with a ſmall number of nobles. This is capable of the ſame variations as monarchy, and it may be either temporary or perpetual, hereditary or

elective, with this difference, that a temporary or elective ariſtocracy always puts ſome power in the hands of the people. The moſt complete ariſtocracy is when the ruling party have the power of cooptation within themſelves, and can fill up as they pleaſe, the vacancies made by deaths or reſignation.

Democracy is when the ſupreme power is left in the multitude. But as in large governments the people in a collective body cannot well meet together, nor could they tranſact buſineſs with any convenience if they did, they may meet by repreſentatives choſen either by the whole, or by particular diſtricts.

From thoſe ſimple forms are generated many complex forms; two of them may be compounded together, either in equal or in different proportions, or all theſe may be united, as in the Britiſh government.

After pointing out the ſimple forms of government, it will be proper to make ſome general obſervations upon government, and apply them to the various forms, to ſhow whether any of them is preferable to the other, and the advantages and defects of each in particular.

I. There are four things that ſeem to be requiſite in a ſyſtem of government, and every form is good in proportion as it poſſeſſes or attains them, (1) wiſdom to plan proper meaſures for the public good. (2) Fidelity to have nothing but the public intereſt in view. (3) Secrecy, expedition, and diſpatch in carrying meaſures into execution, and (4) Unity and concord, or that one branch of the government may not impede, or be a hindrance to another.

Monarchy has plainly the advantage in unity, ſecrecy, and expedition. Many cannot ſo eaſily nor ſo ſpeedily agree upon proper meaſures, nor can they expect to keep their deſigns ſecret; therefore ſay ſome, if a man could be found wiſe enough, and juſt enough for the charge, monarchy would be the beſt form of government. Accordingly we find that in the command of a ſhip, fleet or army, one perſon is commonly intruſted with ſupreme power; but this does not apply to ſtates, for many reaſons. No man can be found who has either ſkill ſuffici-

ent, or if he had, could give attention to the whole departments of a great empire. Beſides, in hereditary monarchies there is no ſecurity at all for either wiſdom or goodneſs, and an elective monarchy, though it may ſeem to promiſe ability, has been always found in experience worſe than the other, becauſe there is no reaſon to expect that an elected monarch will have the public good at heart, he will probably mind only private or family intereſt.

Ariſtocracy has the advantage of all the others for *wisdom* in deliberations, that is to ſay, a number of perſons of the firſt rank muſt be ſuppoſed by their conſultations to be able to diſcover the public intereſt. But it has very little, or no proſpect or fidelity or union. The moſt ambitious projects, and the moſt violent and implacable factions often prevail in ſuch ſtates.

Democracy has the advantage of both the others for fidelity; the multitude collectively always are true in intention to the intereſt of the public, becauſe it is their own. They are the public. But at the ſame time it has very little advantage for wiſdom, or union, and none at all for ſecrecy, and expedition. Beſides, the multitude are exceeding apt to be deceived by demagogues and ambitious perſons. They are very apt to truſt a man who ſerves them well, with ſuch power as that he is able to make them ſerve him.

If the true notion of liberty is the prevalence of law and order, and the ſecurity of individuals, none of the ſimple forms are favorable to it.

Monarchy every one knows is but another name for tyranny, where the arbitrary will of one capricious man diſpoſes of the lives and properties of all ranks.

Ariſtocracy always makes vaſſals of the inferior ranks, who have no hand in government, and the great commonly rule with greater ſeverity than abſolute monarchs. A monarch is at ſuch a diſtance from moſt of his ſubjects, that he does them little injury; but the lord of a petty ſeignory is a rigorous taſk-maſter to his unhappy dependants. The jealouſy with which the members of an ariſtocratical ſtate defend their own privileges is no ſecurity

at all for humanity and eaſy treatment to their inferiors. Example—the Spartans; their treatment of the Helots—and the barons in all the feudal governments, in their treatment of their vaſſals.

Pure democracy cannot ſubſiſt long, nor be carried far into the departments of ſtate—it is very ſubject to caprice and the madneſs of popular rage. They are alſo very apt to chuſe a favorite, and veſt him with ſuch power as overthrows their own liberty,—examples, Athens and Rome.

Hence it appears that every good form of government muſt be complex, ſo that the one principle may check the other. It is of conſequence to have as much virtue among the particular members of a community as poſſible; but it is folly to expect that a ſtate ſhould be upheld by integrity in all who have a ſhare in managing it. They muſt be ſo balanced, that when every one draws to his own intereſt or inclination, there may be an over poiſe upon the whole.

II. The ſecond obſervation upon the forms of government is, that where there is a balance of different bodies, as in all mixed forms, there muſt be always ſome *nexus imperii*, ſomething to make one of them neceſſary to the other. If this is not the caſe, they will not only draw different ways, but will often ſeparate altogether from each other. In order to produce this *nexus*, ſome of the great eſſential rights of rulers muſt be divided and diſtributed among the different branches of the legiſlature. Example in the Britiſh government, the king has the power of making war and peace,—but the parliament have the levying and diſtribution of money, which is a ſufficient reſtraint.

III. The third obſervation is that the ruling part of any ſtate muſt always have conſiderable property, chiefly of lands. The reaſon is, property has ſuch an invariable influence, that whoever poſſeſſes property muſt have power. Property in a ſtate is alſo ſome ſecurity for fidelity, becauſe intereſt then is concerned in the public welfare.

For this reaſon, did men in every ſtate live entirely by agriculture, an agrarian law would be neceſſary to liberty, becauſe if a vaſt proportion of property came into a few hands, they would ſoon take all power to themſelves. But trade and commerce ſuperſede the neceſſity of this, becauſe the great and ſudden fortunes accumulated by trade cauſe a rotation of property.

IV. In a well formed ſtate the ſubjects ſhould not be too numerous, nor too few. If very numerous, the principles of government cannot exert their force over the whole. The Roman empire fell by its own weight. If the ſubjects are too few, they are not ſufficient to ſuppreſs internal inſurrections, or repel attacks from without.

V. It is frequently obſerved, that in every government there is a ſupreme irreſiſtible power lodged ſome where, in king, ſenate, or people. To this power is the final appeal in all queſtions. Beyond this we cannot go. How far does this authority extend? We anſwer as far as authority in a ſocial ſtate can extend, it is not accountable to any other tribunal, and it is ſuppoſed in the ſocial compact that we have agreed to ſubmit to its deciſion. There is however an exception, if the ſupreme power wherever lodged, come to be exerciſed in a manifeſtly tyrannical manner, the ſubjects may certainly if in their power, reſiſt and overthrow it. But this is only when it becomes manifeſtly more advantageous to unſettle the government altogether, than to ſubmit to tyranny. This reſiſtance to the ſupreme power however, is ſubverting the ſociety altogether, and is not to be attempted till the government is ſo corrupt as that anarchy and the uncertainty of a new ſettlement is preferable to the continuance as it is.

This doctrine of reſiſtance even to the ſupreme power, is eſſentially connected with what has been ſaid on the ſocial contract, and the conſent neceſſary to political union. If it be aſked who muſt judge when the government may be reſiſted, I anſwer the ſubjects in general, every one for himſelf. This may ſeem to be making them both judge and party, but there is no remedy. It

would be denying the privilege altogether, to make the oppreſſive ruler the judge.

It is eaſy to ſee that the meaning of this is not, that any little miſtake of the rulers of any ſociety will juſtify reſiſtance. We muſt obey and ſubmit to them always, till the corruption becomes intolerable, for to ſay that we might reſiſt legal authority every time we judged it to be wrong, would be inconſiſtent with a ſtate of ſociety, and to the very firſt idea of ſubjection.

The once famous controverſy on paſſive obedience and non-reſiſtance, ſeems now in our country to be pretty much over; what the advocates for ſubmiſſion uſed to ſay was, that to teach the lawfulneſs of reſiſting a government in any inſtance, and to make the rebel the judge, is ſubverſive of all order, and muſt ſubject a ſtate to perpetual ſedition; to which I anſwer, to refuſe this inherent right in every man, is to eſtabliſh injuſtice and tyranny, and leave every good ſubject without help, as a tame prey to the ambition and rapacity of others. No doubt men may abuſe the privilege, yet this does not make it void. Beſides it is not till a whole people riſe, that reſiſtance has any effect, and it is not eaſy to ſuppoſe that a whole people would riſe againſt their governors, unleſs when they have really received very great provocation. Whereas on the other hand, nothing is more natural than for rulers to graſp at power, and their ſituation enables them to do it ſucceſsfully by ſlow and inſenſible encroachments. In experience there are many inſtances of rulers becoming tyrants, but comparatively, very few of cauſeleſs and premature rebellions. There are occaſional and partial inſurrections in every government. Theſe are eaſily raiſed by intereſted perſons, but the great majority continues to ſupport order.

VI. Dominion, it is plain from all that has been ſaid, can be acquired juſtly only one way, viz. by conſent. There are two other ways commonly mentioned, both of which are defective, inheritance and conqueſt. Hereditary power which originally roſe from conſent, and is ſuppoſed to be founded upon the continuance of conſent, (as that of the hereditary power in a limited monar-

chy) is as lawful as any, but when they pretend ſuch a right from nature, is independent of the people, it is abſurd.

That which is called the right of conqueſt ought to be exploded altogether. We ſhall ſee by and by what is the right of a conqueror in a juſt war. It was his right before, and he obtains poſſeſſion of it by conqueſt. But to found any claim merely on conqueſt is not a right, but robbery.

Upon the whole, I will conclude with a few remarks upon the ſpirit and tendency of different forms of government.

1. Monarchical government has a tendency to politeneſs and elegance of manners, and generally to luxury. The ſubmiſſion and obſequiouſneſs practiſed at the court of a monarch, diffuſes itſelf through the whole ſtate.

2. Ariſtocracy narrows the mind exceedingly, and indeed cannot long ſubſiſt in a large ſtate. A ſmall ariſtocracy, however, may ſubſiſt as a form of government, as long as any other method, or longer.

3. Democracy tends to plainneſs and freedom of ſpeech, and ſometimes to a ſavage and indecent ferocity. Democracy is the nurſe of eloquence, becauſe when the multitude have the power, perſuaſion is the only way to govern them.

Let us now aſk this ſhort queſtion, what is the value and advantage of civil liberty?

Is it neceſſary to virtue? This cannot be ſuppoſed. A virtuous mind and virtuous conduct is poſſible, and perhaps equally poſſible, in every form of government.

Is it neceſſary to perſonal private happineſs? It may ſeem ſo. We ſee the ſubjects of arbitrary governments however not only happy, but very often they have a greater attachment to their form of government than thoſe of free ſtates have to their's. And if contentment be neceſſary to happineſs, there is commonly more impatience and diſcontent in a free ſtate than in any other. The tyranny even of an abſolute monarch does not effect with perſonal injury any of his ſubjects but a few, and chiefly thoſe who make it their choice to be near him. Perhaps

in free governments the law and the mob do more miſchief to private property, than is done in any abſolute monarchy.

What then is the advantage of civil liberty? I ſuppoſe it chiefly conſiſts in its tendency to put in motion all the human powers. Therefore it promotes induſtry, and in this reſpect happineſs,—produces every latent quality, and improves the human mind.—Liberty is the nurſe of riches, literature and heroiſm.

LECTURE XIII.

Of the Law of Nature and Nations.

THE next thing in order, is to treat of what is called the law of *nature* and *nations*. It has been before obſerved, that ſeparate and independent ſtates are with regard to one another in a ſtate of natural liberty, or as man to man before the commencement of civil ſociety. On this ſeveral queſtions ariſe. (1) Is there any ſuch law? (2) What is the law? (3) What is its ſanction, or how is it to be enforced?

That there is ſuch a law is plain from the reaſons that ſhow the obligation which one man lies under to another. If there are natural rights of men, there are natural rights of nations. Bodies politic in this view, do not differ in the leaſt from individuals. Therefore as before, reaſon, conſcience and common utility, ſhow that there is a law of nature and nations.

The queſtion what it is? Muſt be conſidered in the ſame manner. I am not able to recollect any perfect or imperfect right that can belong to one man, as diſtinguiſhed from another, but what belongs to nations, ſave that there is uſually leſs occaſion for the imperfect rights. If we read over the perfect rights, in a ſtate of natural liberty, (page 417) we ſhall ſee they all apply to nations.

It will alſo appear that the imperfect rights apply; but the occaſions of exerting them are much more rare. For example, it is more rare to ſee a nation in a ſtate of general indigence, ſo as to require a ſupply. Yet this ſometimes happens. It did ſo in the caſe of Portugal, at the time of the great earthquake at Liſbon. And the other nations of Europe lent them aſſiſtance. It is alſo from this principle that ſhips of different nations, meeting at ſea, will do acts of humanity to one another. Sometimes alſo there are national favors that deſerve national gratitude. But this is ſeldom merited, and I believe, ſtill ſeldomer paid.

As to the ſanction of the law of nature and nations, it is no other than a general ſenſe of duty, and ſuch a ſenſe of common utility, as makes men fear that if they notoriouſly break theſe laws, reproach and infamy among all nations will be the effect, and probably reſentment and indignation by common conſent.

The violation of the natural rights of mankind being a tranſgreſſion of the law of nature, and between nations as in a ſtate of natural liberty, there being no method of redreſs but force, the law of nature and nations has as its chief or only object the manner of making *war* and *peace*.

In war it is proper to conſider diſtinctly, (1) The cauſes for which a juſt war may be carried on. (2) The time of commencing. (3) The duration. (4) The means by which it may be carried on.

As to the firſt, the cauſes of commencing war are according to the principles above laid down, the violation of any perfect right—as taking away the property of the other ſtate, or the lives of its ſubjects, or reſtraining them in their induſtry, or hindering them in the uſe of things common, &c. There is only one perfect right, the violation of which does not ſeem to be a cauſe of war; I mean that by which we have a right to character. National calumny is ſcarcely a cauſe of war, becauſe it cannot be frequent or of great effect. The violation of imperfect rights cannot uſually be a cauſe of war between nations; yet a caſe may be ſuppoſed, in which even theſe would be a juſt cauſe of war. Suppoſe a ſhip of any nation ſhould go

into a port of another, in the greateſt diſtreſs, and not only the people in general, but the governing part of the ſociety ſhould deny them all aſſiſtance—This would be an act of ſuch notorious inhumanity, and of ſuch evil example, that it may juſtify national reſentment; and yet even here, I think there ſhould firſt be a demand of juſtice upon the offending perſons, before vengeance ſhould be taken upon the ſtate.

Theſe are the juſt and legitimate cauſes of making war. Some add to them, that when a nation is ſeen to put itſelf in ſuch a ſituation as to defence, or as to the means of annoying others, that it ſeems to threaten hoſtilities, then we are not obliged to wait till it hath committed actual injury, but may put it in a ſtate of incapacity: but there is no other truth in this, but what is founded upon the other; for the preſervation of our property implies, that if others take ſuch meaſures as are not to be accounted for but upon the ſuppoſition of an intention of wronging me, it is often eaſier and ſafer to prevent and diſarm the robber, than to ſuffer him to commit the violence, and then to ſtrip him and rob him of his prey.

One thing more is to be added, that every nation has a right to join which it pleaſes of two contending parties, This is eaſily reſolved into the general principles; for the injured party may be ſuppoſed to go to war in defence of ſome perfect right; and the cauſe being juſt, the imperfect right of humanity, as well as general and common utility, calls for aſſiſtance to the oppreſſed. So that if we have a right to aſſociate with any nation, we may be entitled to protect their property and rights.

2. As to the time of commencing war, it ſeems to be no way contrary to natural law to ſay it is at any time the injured party pleaſes, after having received an injury; but accident or utility, or a deſire in each party to manifeſt the equity of their cauſe, has introduced univerſally the cuſtom of declaring war. This begun very early, and though not of abſolute right, having been generally introduced, muſt be continued, though there is often more of form than of ſubſtance in it; for nations do often begin both attack and defence before declaration, as well as make

all the neceſſary preparations for ſtriking the moſt effectual blow. The meaning of a declaration of war ſeems to be, to call upon the injured party to prevent it by reparation—Likewiſe to manifeſt to all other ſtates, the juſtice of the cauſe.

3. The duration of a war ſhould be according to natural equity, till the injury be completely redreſſed, and reaſonable ſecurity given againſt future attacks: therefore the practice, too common, of continuing a war for the acquiſition of empire, is to be condemned. Becauſe one ſtate has done ſome injury to another, it ſeems quite unreaſonable that they ſhould not only repair the injury, but ſubvert and ruin the offending ſtate altogether—this would be unreaſonable between man and man, if one had wronged another, not only to repair the wrong, but to take all the reſt that he had, and reduce his family to beggary. It is even more unreaſonable in ſtates, becauſe the offenders in ſtates are not to be ſuppoſed to be the whole people, but only the rulers, or perhaps only ſome individuals.

Perhaps it may be aſked what is *reasonable* ſecurity againſt future injury. I anſwer, between equal independent nations, ſolemn treaties ought to be conſidered as ſecurity, but if faith has been often broken, perhaps ſomething more may be required. The mutual complaints of nations againſt each other for breach of faith, makes conquerors often demand ſuch a degree of ſecurity, as puts the conquered altogether in their power.

4. As to the legitimate means of carrying on the war, in general, it may be ſaid in one word, by force or open violence. It is admitted on all hands, that this force may be uſed againſt the perſon and goods, not only of the rulers, but of every member of the hoſtile ſtate. This may ſeem hard, that innocent ſubjects of the ſtate ſhould ſuffer for the folly and indiſcretion of the rulers, or of other members of the ſame ſtate, but it is unavoidable. The whole individuals that compoſe a ſtate, are conſidered but as one body; it would be impoſſible for an enemy to diſtinguiſh the guilty from the innocent; and when men ſubmit to a government, they riſk their own poſſeſſions on the ſame bottom with the whole in return for the benefits of ſociety.

Open violence may be ſaid to have no bounds, and therefore every method that can be invented, and the moſt deadly weapons of annoyance may ſeem to be permitted—But from what has been ſaid above, and upon the principles of general equity, all acts of cruelty and inhumanity are to be blamed,—and all ſeverity that has not an immediate effect in weakening the national ſtrength of the enemy is certainly inhumanity—Such as killing priſoners whom you can keep ſafely—killing women and children —burning and deſtroying every thing that could be of uſe in life.

The uſe of poiſoned weapons has been alſo generally condemned—the poiſoning of ſprings or proviſions.

To the honor of modern times, and very probably, I think, to the honor of chriſtianity, there is much more humanity in the way of carrying on war than formerly.

To aim particularly at the life of a leader or perſon of chief note, ſeems to have nothing in it unjuſt or improper, becauſe the more important the life, it does more toward the finiſhing of the war; but what many ſeem to admit, the bribing of his own people to aſſaſſinate him privately, I cannot think honorable or fair.

A queſtion is often moved in morals, how far it is lawful to deceive an enemy, eſpecially if we hold the general and univerſal obligation of truth. To this it may be anſwered, in the firſt place that we may certainly with great juſtice conceal our own deſigns from an enemy—as indeed we may generally from friends, by ſilence and guarding againſt every circumſtance that may betray them. Neither do I think there is any thing at all blame-worthy in a general of an army uſing ambiguous ſigns, as feigned marches of a part or the whole, putting up lights or ſuch things, becauſe after a declaration of war he does not pretend to give information to his enemy of his motions, nay it is expected on both ſides that they will do the beſt they can to over-reach one another in point of prudence. Yet I can ſcarce think it right to employ people to go to the enemy and profeſſing to be ſincere, tell direct falſehoods, and deceive them by that falſe intelligence.

It is the cuſtom of all to ſend ſpies to diſcover the enemy's deſigns, and alſo to bribe ſome of the enemies themſelves to diſcover the deſigns of their leaders—The laſt of which is, I think, at leaſt of a doubtful nature, or rather unjuſt—Though ſending ſpies is by all approved, yet (what may ſeem a little unaccountable) ſuch ſpies are always puniſhed with inſtant death by the oppoſite ſide when detected. The reaſon probably is, that pretending friendſhip they have a right to conſider them as traitors—Or as they are in an act of hoſtility, they kill them, as they would do an enemy in battle when in their power.

Theſe circumſtances apply to all war in general: but there is a diſtinction of wars by civilians into two kinds, *ſolemn* and *civil*. The firſt includes all wars between ſtates formerly independent, the other, internal inſurrections of a part of one government againſt another.

There has generally been a great difference in the behavior of the oppoſite parties in theſe different wars. In ſolemn wars there is a preſumption of integrity in the plurality on both ſides, each believes his own cauſe to be juſt. On this account they are to be treated with the more humanity. In civil wars the inſurgents are conſidered as making unjuſt reſiſtance to the ruling part of the ſociety, and therefore guilty of the greateſt crimes againſt ſociety. Therefore they are often treated with great rigor, and when taken in battle, reſerved to ſolemn trial and public execution. There is ſome reaſon for this in many caſes, when it is indeed an unreaſonable or unprovoked inſurrection of diſorderly citizens; but there are many caſes in which the pretences on both ſides are ſo plauſible, that the war ſhould be in all reſpects conſidered as ſolemn.

It ſhould be obſerved, notwithſtanding the hoſtile diſpoſition, there are occaſions, both in a treaty for peace and during the continuance of the war, when enemies are under the ſtrongeſt obligations to ſincerity in their behavior to each other.—When propoſals are made for accommodating the differences, for a ſuſpenſion of arms, for an exchange of priſoners, or any thing ſimilar.

It is worth while to inquire, whether the greateſt honor and candor in war, with a ſtrict adherence to all the laws above laid down, would give any party a great advantage who ſhould take the liberty of tranſgreſſing them —as for example, who ſhould uſe poiſoned weapons—ſhould ſend people to tell falſe ſtories—ſhould bribe ſubjects to aſſaſſinate a hoſtile prince—I anſwer, that they would have no advantage at all, but probably the contrary. There is ſomething powerful in magnanimity, which ſubdues the hearts of enemies; nay, ſometimes terrifies them, and particularly inſpires a general's army with invincible courage. Beſides theſe, ſiniſter arts are not ſo terrible as may be imagined—telling falſe news is as eaſily diſcovered as any trick whatſoever.

Prudence and integrity have no need of any aſſiſtance from fraud—acts even of generoſity, from enemy to enemy, are often as uſeful as any acts of hoſtility. There was ſomething very handſome in the Roman general, who refuſed to avail himſelf of the treachery of a ſchool-maſter, as well as whimſical in the way in which he puniſhed the traitor.

Of Making Peace.

As already hinted, all propoſals tending to this purpoſe ought to be made with the utmoſt ſincerity. Of all deceits in war the moſt infamous is that of making a treaty, or ſeeking a conference, only to take advantage of the ſecurity of one party to deſtroy him—by aſſaſſination, or by breaking a truce to fight with advantage.

The terms of peace ought to be agreeable to the end of making war. Damages ſhould be repaired, and ſecurity given againſt future injury.

We have often ſaid that nation to nation is as man to man in a ſtate of natural liberty; therefore treaties of peace between nations ſhould in general proceed upon the ſame principles as private contracts between man and man. There is however an exception, that contracts between individuals are (at leaſt by law) always void when they are the effect of conſtraint upon one ſide. Now this

muſt not hold in treaties between nations, becauſe it would always furniſh a pretext for breaking them. On the ſide of the conquered, a treaty is always in a great degree the effect of neceſſity.

It is generally, however, laid down in moſt authors as a principle, that the terms impoſed and ſubmitted to may be ſometimes ſo rigorous and oppreſſive, as to juſtify the injured party in revolting when they are able. This ſeems to me to be very lax in point of morals. It would be better I think to ſay, that the people who made the treaty ſhould not recede from it. Their poſterity, however, at ſome diſtance, cannot be ſuppoſed bound to unjuſt ſervitude by the deeds of their fathers.

Let us conclude this ſubject by a few remarks on the ſituation of neutral ſtates.

1. Every ſtate has a right, when others are contending, to remain neuter. and aſſiſt neither party.

2. They have a right to all their former privileges with both the contending parties—may carry on their traffic with both, and may ſhow all the uſual marks of friendſhip to both—only it has been generally agreed upon that they are not to trade with any of them in certain articles ſuppoſed to be of conſequence in carrying on war, particularly proviſions and arms.

3. Neutral powers ſhould keep their harbours alike open to both for common refreſhment, and as an aſylum to fly to. And it is held neceſſary that the contending powers muſt not carry on their quarrel, nor exerciſe any hoſtilities, within the territories of a neutral ſtate.

4. Neutral ſtates may purchaſe moveable goods from any of the contending parties, which have been taken from the other. But not ſo with reſpect to lands or forts, becauſe if the other party are able, they will re-take their poſſeſſions.

5. Deeds of a violent poſſeſſor are held to be valid, that is to ſay, if a conqueror prevails for a time, and levies tribute from any country, and afterwards the rightful poſſeſſor prevails, it would be unjuſt to demand the tribute again, becauſe the true owner was not able to give protection to the ſubjects, and what was paid was loſt through

his weakneſs. The ſame thing may be ſaid of a dependant ſtate; if it owes any money and ſervice to a ſupreme ſtate, and an enemy exact it by force, the proper creditor cannot juſtly demand it again.

On the whole, thoſe things that have been generally received as the law of nature and nations, are founded on the principles of equity, and when well obſerved, do greatly promote general utility.

LECTURE XIV.

JURISPRUDENCE.

JURISPRUDENCE is the method of enacting and adminiſtering civil laws in any conſtitution.

We cannot propoſe to go through a ſyſtem of civil laws, and therefore what I have in view is to make ſome preliminary remarks, and then to point out the *object* of civil laws, and the manner of their operation.

1. The firſt preliminary remark is, that a conſtitution is excellent when the ſpirit of the civil laws is ſuch as to have a tendency to prevent offences and made men good, as much as to puniſh them when they do evil.

This is neceſſary in ſome meaſure; for when the general diſpoſition of a people is againſt the laws, they cannot long ſubſiſt, even by a ſtrict and rigorous execution on the part of the rulers. There is however more of this in ſome conſtitutions than in others. Solon and Xenophon, as well as Lycurgus, ſeem to have formed their plan very much with this view, to direct the manners of the people in the firſt place, which will always make the obſervation of particular laws eaſy.

But how ſhall the magiſtrate manage this matter, or what can be done by law to make the people of any ſtate virtuous? If, as we have ſeen above, virtue and piety are inſeparably connected, then to promote true religion is the beſt and moſt effectual way of making a virtuous and regular people. Love to God, and love to man, is the

ſubſtance of religion; when theſe prevail, civil laws will have little to do.

But this leads to a very important diſquiſition, how far the magiſtrate ought to interfere in matters of religion. Religious ſentiments are very various—and we have given it as one of the perfect rights in natural liberty, and which ought not to be alienated even in ſociety, that every one ſhould judge for himſelf in matters of religion.

What the magiſtrate may do on this ſubject ſeems to be confined to the three following particulars.

(1.) The magiſtrate (or ruling part of any ſociety) ought to encourage piety by his own example, and by endeavoring to make it an object of public eſteem. Whenever the general opinion is in favor of any thing, it will have many followers. Magiſtrates may promote and encourage men of piety and virtue, and they may diſcountenance thoſe whom it would be improper to puniſh.

(2.) The magiſtrate ought to defend the rights of conſcience, and tolerate all in their religious ſentiments that are not injurious to their neighbors. In the ancient heathen ſtates there was leſs occaſion for this, becauſe in the ſyſtem of polytheiſm the different gods and rites were not ſuppoſed to be oppoſite, but co-ordinate and conſiſtent; but when there is believed to be but one God, the ſentiments about his nature and worſhip will often be conſidered as eſſentially repugnant one to another.

The pretence of infidels, that perſecution only belongs to the Chriſtian religion, is abſurd; for the Chriſtian was the firſt religion that was perſecuted, and it was the neceſſary conſequence of ſaying, that the gods of the heathens were no gods.

At preſent as things are ſituated, one of the moſt important duties of the magiſtracy is to protect the rights of conſcience.

It is commonly ſaid, however, that in caſe any ſect holds tenets ſubverſive of ſociety and inconſiſtent with the rights of others, that they ought not to be tolerated. On this footing Popery is not tolerated in Great Britain; becauſe they profeſs entire ſubjection to a foreign power, the ſee of Rome; and therefore muſt be in oppoſition to

the proper intereſt of their own ſtate; and becauſe violence or perſecution for religion is a part of their religion, which makes their proſperity threaten ruin to others—as well as the principle imputed to them, which they deny, that faith is not to be kept with heretics. But however juſt this may be in a way of reaſoning, we ought in general to guard againſt perſecution on a religious account as much as poſſible, becauſe ſuch as hold abſurd tenets are ſeldom dangerous. Perhaps they are never dangerous, but when they are oppreſſed. Papiſts are tolerated in Holland without danger to liberty. And though not properly tolerated, they are now connived at in Britain.

In ancient times, in great ſtates the cenſorial power was found neceſſary to their continuance, which inſpected the manners of men. It ſeems probable, that ſupporting the religious ſects in modern times anſwers this end, for the particular diſcipline of each ſect, is intended for the correction of manners.

(3.) The magiſtrate may enact laws for the puniſhment of acts of profanity and impiety. The different ſentiments of men in religion, ought not by any means to encourage or give a ſanction to ſuch acts as any of them count profane.

Many are of opinion that beſides all this, the magiſtrate ought to make public proviſion for the worſhip of God, in ſuch manner as is agreeable to the great body of the ſociety; though at the ſame time all who diſſent from it, are fully tolerated. And indeed there ſeems to be a good deal of reaſon for it, that ſo inſtruction may be provided for the bulk of common people, who would, many of them, neither ſupport nor employ teachers, unleſs they were obliged. The magiſtrate's right in this caſe, ſeems to be ſomething like that of the parent, they have a right to inſtruct, but not to conſtrain.

2. The ſecond preliminary remark is, that laws ſhould be ſo framed as to promote ſuch principles in general, as are favorable to good government, and particularly that principle, if there be one, that gave riſe to the conſtitution, and is congenial to it.

Such a principle as I have in view, is generally the point of honor in a country, and this lawgivers and adminiſtrators of law ſhould endeavor to preſerve in its full vigor, for whenever it is undermined, the conſtitution goes to ruin.

Of theſe principles, ſobriety, induſtry, and public ſpirit are the chief. Some ſtates are formed to ſubſiſt by ſobriety and parſimony, as the Lacedemonians.

Induſtry is the prevailing principle in others, as in Holland. Public ſpirit in others, as in Greece, ancient Rome, and Britain. Only public ſpirit may be diverſified, ſometimes it is a paſſion for acquiring glory and dominion, as in Rome, and ſometimes for preſerving liberty, as in Greece and Britain.

When I ſay that in the management of a ſtate, the utmoſt attention ſhould be given to the principle of the conſtitution, to preſerve it in its vigor, I mean that though all other crimes are bad, and in part tend to the ruin of a ſtate, yet this is much more the caſe with crimes againſt that principle than any other. Any act of immorality was bad at Sparta, but to make poverty and parſimony reproachful, and to introduce fine houſes and furniture, and delicate entertainments, would have been inſtant ruin.

Any act of immorality would be hurtful in Holland, but to make fraudulent bankruptcy leſs infamous than it is, would immediately deſtroy them.

Sobriety, induſtry, and public ſpirit are nearly allied, and have a reciprocal influence upon one another. Yet there may be a great degree of ſome of them, in the abſence of the others. In Sparta there was much ſobriety and public ſpirit, but little induſtry. In Athens, induſtry and public ſpirit, with very little parſimony.

In oppoſition to the whole of this, Mandeville wrote a book called *The fable of the Bees*, which ſeems to be levelled againſt ſobriety, induſtry and public ſpirit, all at once; his poſition is, *that private vices are public benefits*, and that the waſte and luxury of one man ſupplies the wants of another; but it is eaſy to overthrow his reaſoning, for though ſober and induſtrious perſons ſpend

each leſs than a profuſe perſon, yet ſobriety and induſtry tend much more to population, and by that means they are mutually ſerviceable to each other. Luxury and vice only waſte and deſtroy, they add nothing to the common ſtock of property or of happineſs. Experience fully juſtifies this, for though from the luxury of one man another may reap ſome gain, the luxury of a nation always tends to the ruin of that nation.

3. A third preliminary remark is, that laws may be of two kinds, either written, or in the breaſts of magiſtrates. In every conſtitution of note, there is ſomething of each of theſe kinds. It is uncertain whether it is better to have many or few ſpecial laws. On the one hand it ſeems to be the very ſpirit of a free conſtitution, to have every thing as ſtrictly defined as poſſible, and to leave little in the power of the judge. But on the other hand, a multiplicity of laws is ſo apt to lead to litigation and to end in ambiguity, that perhaps judges of equity, choſen by the diſtrict in which they live and are to act, and choſen but for a time, would be a more juſt and equitable method of ending differences. But the difficulty of ſettling a conſtitution ſo as always to ſecure the election of impartial judges, has made modern ſtates where there is liberty, prefer a multiplicity of written laws.

4. The laſt preliminary remark is, that no human conſtitution can be ſo formed, but that there muſt be exceptions to every law. So that there may be in every nation oppreſſion under form of law, according to the old maxim, ſummum jus ſumma injuria. This further ſhews the neceſſity of forming the manners of a people.

After having laid down theſe preliminaries, we may obſerve that the object of civil laws may be divided into the three following particulars.

1. To ratify the moral laws by the ſanction of the ſociety. The tranſgreſſion of ſuch laws are called *crimes*, as profanity, adultery, murder, calumny, &c. And they are proſecuted and puniſhed by order of the public, according to the ſpirit of every conſtitution.

2. To lay down a plan for all contracts in the com-

merce or intercourſe between man and man. To ſhow when a contract is valid, and how to be proved. The tranſgreſſions of ſuch laws are called *frauds*. They chiefly regard the acquiſition, tranſmiſſion, or alienation of property.

3. To limit and direct perſons in the exerciſe of their own rights, and oblige them to ſhow reſpect to the interfering rights of others. This contains the whole of what is called the police of a country.—And the tranſgreſſion of ſuch laws are called *trespasses*. A number of things in this view may become illegal which before were not immoral.

Of the Sanction of the Moral Laws.

In all poliſhed nations, there are puniſhments annexed to the tranſgreſſion of the moral laws, whether againſt God, our neighbor, or ourſelves; in the doing of which, the three following things are chiefly neceſſary.

(1.) To determine what crimes and what degree of the ſame crime, are to be inquired into by the civil magiſtrate. It is of neceſſity that in a free ſtate crimes ſhould be preciſely defined, that men may not be ignorantly or raſhly drawn into them. There are degrees of every crime—profanity, impurity, violence, ſlander, that are blameable in point of morals, nay, even ſuch as may fall under the diſcipline of a religious ſociety—that if they were made cogniſable by the civil magiſtrate, would multiply laws and trials beyond meaſure.

(2.) To appoint the methods of aſcertaining the commiſſion of crimes. This is uſually by teſtimony in which we are to conſider the number and character of the witneſſes. Generally through chriſtendom, and indeed moſt other parts of the world, two witneſſes have been eſteemed neceſſary to fix crimes upon an accuſed perſon; not but that the poſitive evidence of one perſon of judgment and untainted character is, in many caſes, ſufficient to gain belief and often ſtronger than two of unknown or doubtful credit, but it was neceſſary to lay down ſome rule, and two are required to guard

againſt the danger of hired evidence, and to give an opportunity of trying how they agree together. To have required more would have made a proof difficult or impoſſible in many caſes.

It ſeems to be a maxim in law, and founded on reaſon, that in the caſe of what are called occult crimes, ſuch as murder, adultery, forgery, and ſome others, where the nature of the thing ſhows that there muſt be a penury of evidence, they ſometimes content themſelves with fewer witneſſes, if there are corroborating circumſtances to ſtrengthen their teſtimony.

It ſeems to be a matter not eaſily decided, whether it be agreeable to reaſon and juſtice, in the caſe of very atrocious crimes, that on account of the *atrocity*, *less* evidence ſhould be ſufficient for conviction, or that *more* ſhould be required. On the one hand, the more atrocious the crime, the greater the hurt to ſociety, and the more need of public vengeance. On the other hand, the more atrocious the crime, and the heavier the puniſhment, it ſeems agreeable to juſtice that the conviction ſhould be upon the more unqueſtioned evidence. Lawyers are ſeen to take their common places, ſometimes the one way, ſometimes the other. It is often thought that in practice, leſs evidence is ſufficient to convict a man of murder, forgery, rape, and other crimes of a deep dye. But I am perſuaded that the appearance is owing to the greater and more general eagerneſs to diſcover the perpetrators of ſuch crimes. Others are ſuffered to eſcape more eaſily, not that more evidence is neceſſary, but that it is more difficult to get at the evidence.

Evidence may be diſtinguiſhed into two kinds, *direct* and *circumstantial*. Direct evidence is when the witneſſes ſwear to their ſight or knowledge of the accuſed committing the crime. Circumſtantial, when they only ſwear to certain facts which cannot be ſuppoſed to have exiſted unleſs the crime had been committed. As a man found dead—another found near the place—with a weapon bloody,—or clothes bloody, &c. Some have affirmed that circumſtantial evidence is ſtronger than direct, but it muſt be taken with very great caution and judgment.

(3.) The law is to proportion and appoint the puniſhment due to every crime when proven.

Puniſhment in all regular ſtates, is taken wholly out of the hands of the injured perſons, and committed to the magiſtrate, though in many or moſt caſes the injured party is ſuffered to join the magiſtrate in the proſecution, and to have a certain claim, by way of reparation, as far as that is practicable.

Therefore the puniſhment in general muſt conſiſt of two parts, (1) reparation to the ſufferer, (2) the vindicta publica, which has ſometimes two ends in view, to be an example to others, and to reclaim and reform the offender, as in corporal puniſhment leſs than death. Sometimes but one, the good of others in the example, as in capital puniſhments, and baniſhment.

The kind of puniſhment and the degree, is left wholly to different lawgivers, and the ſpirit of different conſtitutions. Public utility is the rule. Puniſhment is not always proportioned to the atrociouſneſs of the crime in point of morals, but to the frequency of it, and the danger of its prevailing.

Some nations require, and ſome will bear greater ſeverity in puniſhments than others.

The ſame or ſimilar conduct often produces oppoſite effects. Severe laws and ſevere puniſhments, ſometimes baniſh crimes, but very often the contrary. When laws are very ſanguinary, it often makes the ſubjects hate the law more than they fear it, and the tranſition is very eaſy, from hating the law to hating thoſe who are entruſted with the execution of it. Such a ſtate of things threatens inſurrections and convulſions, if not the diſſolution of a government.

Another uſual effect of exceſſive ſeverity in laws is, that they are not put in execution. The public is not willing to lend its aid to the diſcovery and conviction of offenders; ſo that in time the law itſelf becomes a mere brutum fulmen, and loſes its authority.

I may make one particular remark, that though many things are copied from the law of Moſes into the laws of the modern nations, yet ſo far as I know, none of them

have introduced the lex talionis in the caſe of injuries, an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth, &c. and yet perhaps there are many inſtances in which it would be very proper. The equity of the puniſhment would be quite manifeſt, and probably it would be as effectual a reſtraint from the commiſſion of injury, as any that could be choſen.

The concluding remark ſhall be, that it is but ſeldom that very ſevere and ſanguinary laws are of ſervice to the good order of a ſtate; but after laws have been fixed with as much equity and moderation as poſſible, the execution of them ſhould be ſtrict and rigorous. Let the laws be *juſt* and the magiſtrate *inflexible.*

LECTURE XV.

THE ſecond object of civil laws being to regulate the making of contracts, and the whole intercourſe between man and man relating to the acquiſition, poſſeſſion and alienation of property, we muſt conſider carefully the nature of

Contracts.

A contract is a ſtipulation between two parties, before at liberty, to make ſome alteration of property, or to bind one or both parties to the performance of ſome ſervice.

Contracts are abſolutely neceſſary in ſocial life. Every tranſaction almoſt may be conſidered as a contract, either more or leſs expiicit.

The principle thing which conſtitutes a contract is, *conſent.* But in ſome kinds of contracts, viz. the gratuitous, the conſent of the receiver is preſumed. In the tranſmiſſion of eſtates by donation or teſtament this is preſumed—and thoſe who are incapable of giving their conſent through infancy, may notwithſtanding acquire property and rights. When a man comes into a ſettled country and purchaſes property, he is ſuppoſed, beſides every other part of the bargain, to purchaſe it under ſuch

conditions, and ſubject himſelf to ſuch laws as are in force in that country.

Contracts are ſaid to be of three degrees in point of fulneſs and preciſion—(1.) A ſimple affirmation of a deſign as to futurity—as when I ſay to any one that I ſhall go to ſuch a place to-morrow: this is not properly binding, and it is ſuppoſed that many things may occur to make me alter my reſolution—yet a frequent alteration of profeſſed purpoſes gives the character of levity; therefore a prudent man will be cautious of declaring his purpoſes till he is well determined. (2.) A gratuitous promiſe of doing ſome favor to me. This is not made binding in law, nor does it uſually convey a perfect right, becauſe it ſuppoſes that the perſon who was the object of good-will, may, by altering his behaviour, forfeit his title to it, or that the perſon promiſing may find it much more inconvenient, coſtly or hurtful to himſelf, than he ſuppoſed; or, laſtly, that what was intended as a ſervice if performed, appears plainly to be an injury. In the laſt caſe every one muſt ſee, that it cannot be binding; but in the two former, I apprehend that in all ordinary caſes a diſtant promiſe is binding in conſcience, though it may not be neceſſary to make it binding in law. I ſay all ordinary caſes, becauſe it is eaſy to figure a caſe in which I may make a promiſe to another, and ſuch circumſtances may afterwards occur as I am quite confident, if the perſon knew, he would not hold me to my promiſe.

3. The third degree is a complete contract, with conſent on both ſides, and obligation upon one or both.

The eſſentials of a contract which render it valid, and any of which being wanting, it is void, are as follow:

That it be, (1.) Free. (2.) Mutual. (3.) Poſſible. (4.) Careful. (5.) With a capable perſon. (6.) Formal.

Firſt. It muſt be free. Contracts made by unjuſt force are void always in law, and ſometimes in conſcience. It muſt however be unjuſt force, becauſe in treaties of peace between nations, as we have ſeen before, force does not void the contract; and even in private life ſometimes men are forced to enter into contracts by the order of a

magiſtrate, ſometimes by the threatening of legal proſecution, which does not make them void.

2. They muſt be mutual, that is, the conſent of the one as well as that of the other muſt be had. Contracts in this view become void either by fraud on one ſide, or by eſſential error. If any man contrives a contract ſo as to bind the other party, and keep himſelf free, this fraud certainly nullifies the agreement—or if there is an eſſential error in the perſon or the thing, as if a perſon ſhould oblige himſelf to one man, ſuppoſing him to be another.

3. Contracts ſhould be of things evidently poſſible, and probably in our power. Contracts by which men oblige themſelves to do things impoſſible, are no doubt void from the beginning; but if the impoſſibility was known to the contracting party, it muſt have been either abſurd or fraudulent. When things engaged for become impoſſible by the operation of Providence, without a man's own fault, the contract is void, and he is guiltleſs—as if a man ſhould covenant to deliver at a certain place and time a number of cattle, and when he is almoſt at the place of deſtination they ſhould be killed by thunder, or any other accident, out of his power.

4. Contracts muſt be of things lawful. All engagements to do things unlawful, are from the beginning void; but by unlawful muſt be underſtood the violation of perfect rights. If a man oblige himſelf for a reward to commit murder, or any kind of fraud, the engagement is void; but it was criminal in the tranſacting, and the reward ought to be returned, or given to public uſes. There are many contracts, however, which are very blameable in making, that muſt, notwithſtanding, be kept, and muſt not be made void in law—as raſh and fooliſh bargains, where there was no fraud on the other ſide. If ſuch were to be voided, great confuſion would be introduced. The caſes of this kind are numerous, and may be greatly diverſified.

5. Contracts muſt be made with a capable perſon, that is to ſay, of age, underſtanding, at liberty, &c. It is part of the civil law, or rather municipal law, of every country, to fix the time of life when perſons are ſuppoſed capable

of transacting their own affairs. Some time must be fixed, otherwise it would occasion numberless disputes, difficult to be decided. A man at the age of fourteen, and a woman at twelve, may choose guardians, who can alienate their property, and at the age of twenty-one they have their estates wholly in their own hand.

6. Contracts must be formal.

The laws of every country limit a great many circumstances of the nature, obligation, extent and duration of contracts.

Having pointed out something of the essential characters of all lawful contracts; I observe they may be divided two different ways, (1) contracts are either absolute or conditional. The absolute are such as are suspended upon no condition, but such as are essential to every contract, which have been mentioned above. Such as when a person makes a settlement upon another, without reserve, then whether he behave well or ill, whether it be convenient or inconvenient, it must be fulfilled. Conditional contracts are those that are suspended on any uncertain future contingency, or some performance by the opposite party. Of this last sort are almost all transactions in the way of commerce,—which leads to the (2) way of dividing contracts, into beneficent and onerous. The first is when one freely brings himself under an obligation to bestow any favor or do any service, as donations or legacies, and undertaking the office of guardian of another person's estate.

The onerous contract is when an equal value is supposed to be given on both sides, as is the case for the most part in the alienation of property—and the transactions between man and man, and between society and society.

To this place belongs the question about the lawfulness of lending money upon interest. If we consider money as an instrument of commerce and giving an opportunity of making profit, there seems plainly to be nothing unjust, that the lender should share in the advantage arising from his own property.

The chief thing neceſſary is, that the ſtate or governing part of the ſociety, ſhould ſettle the rate of intereſt, and not ſuffer it to depend upon the neceſſity of the poor or the covetouſneſs of the rich. If it is not ſettled by law, uſury will be the certain conſequence.

The law of Moſes does not ſeem to have admitted the taking of intereſt at all from an Iſraelite. It is thought however, that the main reaſon of this muſt have been drawn from ſomething in their conſtitution as a ſtate that rendered it improper, for if it had been in itſelf immoral, they would not have been permitted to take it of ſtrangers.

Of the Marks or Signs of Contracts.

All known and intelligent marks of conſent, are the ſigns and means of compleating contracts. The chief of theſe however are words and writing, as being found the moſt eaſy and uſeful. Words are of all others the moſt natural and proper for giving immediate conſent, and writing to perpetuate the memory of the tranſaction. There are however many other ſigns that may be made uſe of, and wherever there is a real purpoſe of ſignifying our intention by which others are brought to depend upon it, the engagement is real, and we are bound in conſcience, though the law in every country muſt of neceſſity be more limited. The whole reſts ultimately on the obligation to ſincerity in the ſocial life.

This obligation ariſes from the teſtimony of conſcience, and from the manifeſt utility and even neceſſity of ſincerity to ſocial intercourſe.

Signs are divided into *natural*, *inſtituted* and *cuſtomary*. Natural ſigns are thoſe which have either a real likeneſs to the thing ſignified, or ſuch a known and univerſal relation to it, that all men muſt naturally be led from the one to the other—As a picture is a natural ſign, becauſe a repreſentation of the thing painted. An inflamed ſullen countenance and fiery eyes, are natural ſigns of anger, becauſe they are the univerſal effects of that Paſſion.

Inſtituted ſigns, are thoſe that have no other connexion with the thing ſignified, than what has been made by agreement, as if two perſons ſhall agree between themſelves, that if the one wants to ſignify to the other at a diſtance, that he wiſhes him to come to his aſſiſtance, he will kindle a fire upon a certain hill, or hang out a flag upon a certain pinnacle of his houſe, or ſome part of his ſhip. Words and writing are properly inſtituted ſigns, for they have no relation to the thing ſignified but what original agreement and long cuſtom has given them.

Cuſtomary ſigns are no other than inſtituted ſigns which have long prevailed, and whoſe inſtitution has either been accidental or has been forgotten. It is alſo uſual to apply the word cuſtomary to ſuch ſigns as depend upon the mode and faſhion of particular countries. There are ſome ſigns and poſtures, which though they may ſeem perfectly arbitrary, have obtained very generally, perhaps univerſally, as bending down the body, or proſtration, as a ſign of reſpect and reverence; kneeling and lifting up the hands, as a ſign of ſubmiſſion and ſupplication.—Perhaps both theſe are natural, as they put the perſon into the ſituation leaſt capable of reſiſtance.

Sometimes there is a mixture of natural and inſtituted ſigns, as if a man ſends a pair of wings, or the figure of them, to a friend, to intimate his danger and the neceſſity of flying.

In the uſe of ſigns, the great rule of ſincerity is, that wherever we are bound, and wherever we profeſs to communicate our intention, we ought to uſe the ſigns in the leaſt ambiguous manner poſſible. When we have no intention, and are under no obligation to communicate any thing to others, it is of ſmall moment what appearances are; it is their buſineſs not to make any unneceſſary or uncertain inferences. A light in a houſe, in the middle of the night, will perhaps ſuggeſt moſt probably, to a traveller accidently paſſing, that there is ſomebody ſick in that houſe; yet perhaps it is extraordinary ſtudy or buſineſs that keeps ſome perſon awake.

Nay when there is no obligation to give, nor any reaſon for the party to expect true information it is held

generally no crime at all, to uſe ſuch ſigns as we have reaſon to ſuppoſe will be miſtaken; as when one who does not deſire to be diſturbed, keeps his chamber cloſe ſhut, that people may conclude he is not there. When a general of an army puts a fire in the camp, to conceal his march or retreat. And probably none would think it faulty when there was an apprehenſion of thieves, to keep a light burning in a chamber, to lead them to ſuppoſe the whole family is not at reſt.

There are ſome who place in the ſame rank, evaſive phraſes, when there is an apparent intention to ſpeak our mind, but no right in the other to obtain it. Such expreſſions may be ſtrictly true, and yet there is all probability that the hearer will miſunderſtand them. As if one ſhould aſk if a perſon was in any houſe, and ſhould receive for anſwer, he went away yeſterday morning; when perhaps he returned the ſame evening. I look upon theſe evaſions, however, as very doubtful, and indeed, rather not to be choſen, becauſe they ſeem to contain a profeſſion of telling our real mind.

Some mention ironical ſpeech as as exception to the obligation to ſincerity. But it is properly no objection at all, becauſe there is no deception. Truth lies not in the words themſelves, but in the uſe of them as ſigns. Therefore if a man ſpeak his words in ſuch a tone and manner as the hearer immediately conceives they are to be taken in an oppoſite ſenſe, and does really take them in the ſenſe the ſpeaker means them, there is no falſehood at all.

Mr. Hutchinſon and ſome others, allow a voluntary intended departure from truth, on occaſion of ſome great neceſſity for a good end. This I apprehend is wrong, for we cannot but conſider deception as in itſelf baſe and unworthy, and therefore a good end cannot juſtify it. Beſides, to ſuppoſe it were in men's power on a ſufficient occaſion to violate truth, would greatly deſtroy its force in general, and its uſe in the ſocial life.

There are two ſorts of falſehood, which becauſe no doubt they are leſs aggravated than malicious intereſted lies, many admit of, but I think without ſufficient reaſon.

(1) Jocular lies, when there is a real deception intended, but not in any thing material, nor intended to continue long. However harmleſs theſe may ſeem, I reckon they are to be blamed, becauſe it is uſing too much freedom with ſo ſacred a thing as truth. And very often ſuch perſons, as a righteous puniſhment in Providence, are left to proceed further, and either to carry their folly to ſuch exceſs, as to become contemptible, or to go beyond folly into malice.

(2) Officious lies, telling falſehoods to children or ſick perſons, for their good. Theſe very ſeldom anſwer the end that is propoſed. They leſſen the reverence for truth; and particularly with regard to children, are exceedingly pernicious, for as they muſt ſoon be diſcovered, they loſe their force, and teach them to deceive. Truth and authority are methods infinitely preferable, in dealing with children, as well as with perſons of riper years.

LECTURE XVI.

Of Oaths and Vows.

AMONG the ſigns and appendages of contracts, are oaths and vows.

An oath is an appeal to God, the ſearcher of hearts, for the truth of what we ſay, and always expreſſes or ſuppoſes an imprecation of his judgment upon us, if we prevaricate.

An oath therefore implies a belief in God, and his Providence, and indeed is an act of worſhip, and ſo accounted in Scripture, as in that expreſſion, *Thou ſhalt fear the Lord thy God, and ſhalt ſwear by his name.* Its uſe in human affairs is very great, when managed with judgment. It may be applied, and indeed has been commonly uſed (1) in the contracts of independent ſtates, who have no common earthly ſuperior. In ancient times it was uſual always to cloſe national treaties by mutual

oaths. This form is not so common in modern times, yet the substance remains; for an appeal is always supposed to be made to God, against the breach of public faith.

(2.) It has been adopted by all nations, in their administration of justice, in order to discover truth. The most common and universal application of it has been to add greater solemnity to the testimony of witnesses. It is also sometimes made use of with the parties themselves, for conviction or purgation. The laws of every country point out the cases in which oaths are required or admitted in public judgment. It is, however, lawful and in common practice, for private persons, voluntarily, on solemn occasions, to confirm what they say, by oath. Persons entering on public offices, are also often obliged to make oath, that they will faithfully execute their trust.

Oaths are commonly divided into two kinds, *assertory* and *promissory*—Those called *purgatory* fall under the first of these divisions. There is perhaps little necessity for a division of oaths, for they do not properly stand by themselves; they are confirmations and appendages of contracts, and intended as an additional security for sincerity, in the commerce between man and man.

Therefore oaths are subject to all the same regulations as contracts; or rather oaths are only lawful, when they are in aid or confirmation of a lawful contract. What therefore voids the one, will void the other, and nothing else. A contract otherwise unlawful, cannot be made binding by an oath: but there must be a very great caution used not to make any unlawful contract, much less to confirm it by an oath.

It is easy to see the extreme absurdity of our being obliged to fulfil a criminal engagement by oath, for it would imply, that out of reverence to God we ought to break his commands; but nothing can be more abominable, than the principle of those who think they may safely take an unlawful oath, because it is not binding: this is aggravating gross injustice by deliberate profanity.

I have said that oaths are appendages to all lawful contracts; but in assertory oaths which are only confirmations of our general obligation to sincerity, it is necessary

not only that what we ſay be true, but that the occaſion be of ſufficient moment to require or juſtify a ſolemn appeal to God. Swearing on common occaſions is unneceſſary, raſh, profane, and deſtructive of the ſolemnity of an oath and its real uſe.

From the general rule laid down, that oaths are lawful when applied to lawful contracts, it will follow that they become unlawful only when the fulfilling of them would be violating a perfect right; but perhaps an additional obſervation is neceſſary here. Contracts muſt be fulfilled, when they violate an imperfect right; whereas ſome oaths may be found criminal and void, though they are only contrary to imperfect rights: as for example, ſome perſons bind themſelves raſhly by oath, that they will never ſpeak to or forgive their children, who have offended them. This is ſo evidently criminal, that nobody will plead for its being obligatory, and yet it is but the violation of an imperfect right. The ſame perſons however, might in many ways alienate their property to the prejudice of their children, by contracts which the law would oblige them to fulfil.

In vows there is no party but God and the perſon himſelf who makes the vow: for this reaſon, Mr. Hutchinſon relaxes their obligation very much—Suppoſing any perſon had ſolemnly vowed to give a certain part of his ſubſtance to public or pious uſes, he ſays if he finds it a great inconvenience to himſelf or family, he is not bound; this I apprehend is too lax. Men ought to be cautious in making ſuch engagements; but I apprehend that when made, if not directly criminal, they ought to be kept.

Of the use of Symbols in Contracts.

Beſides promiſes and oaths, there is ſometimes in contracts a uſe of other viſible ſigns called ſymbols; the moſt common among us are ſigning and ſealing a written deed. There is alſo, in ſome places, the delivery of earth and ſtone in making over land—and ſundry others. In ancient times it was uſual to have ſolemn ſymbols in all trea-

ties—mutual gifts—ſacrifices—feaſts—ſetting up pillars—The intention of all ſuch things, whenever and wherever they have been practiſed, is the ſame. It is to aſcertain and keep up the memory of the tranſaction. They were more frequent and ſolemn in ancient times than now, becauſe before the invention of writing they were more neceſſary.

Of the Value of Property.

Before we finiſh the ſubject of contracts, it may be proper to ſay a little of the nature and value of property, which is the ſubject of them. Nothing has any real value unleſs it be of ſome uſe in human life, or perhaps we may ſay, unleſs it is ſuppoſed to be of uſe, and ſo becomes the object of human deſire—becauſe at particular times, and in particular places, things of very little real importance acquire a value, which is commonly temporary and changeable. Shells and baubles are of great value in ſome places; perhaps there are ſome more baubles highly valued in every place.

But though it is their uſe in life that gives things their value in general, it does not follow that thoſe things that are of moſt uſe and neceſſity, are therefore of greateſt value as property, or in commerce. Air and water, perhaps we may add fire, are of the greateſt uſe and neceſſity; but they are alſo in greateſt plenty, and therefore are of little value as a poſſeſſion or property. Value is in proportion to the plenty of any commodity, and the demand for it. The one taken in the inverſe, and the other in the direct proportion.

Hence it follows that money is of no real value. It is not wealth properly, but the ſign of it, and in a fixed ſtate of ſociety the certain means of procuring it. In early times, traffic was carried on by exchange of goods—but being large, not eaſily divided or tranſported, they became very troubleſome. Therefore it ſoon became neceſſary to fix upon ſome ſign of wealth, to be a ſtandard by which to rate different commodities.

Any thing that is fit to anſwer the purpoſe of a common ſign of wealth, muſt have the following properties: It muſt be (1) valuable, that is, have an intrinſic commercial value, and rare, otherwiſe it could have no comparative value at all. (2.) Durable, otherwiſe it could not paſs from hand to hand. (3.) Diviſible, ſo that it might be in larger or ſmaller quantities as are required. (4.) Portable, it muſt not be of great ſize, otherwiſe it would be extremely inconvenient.

Gold and ſilver were ſoon found to have all theſe properties, and therefore are fixed upon as the ſign of wealth. But beſides being the ſign of the value of other commodities, they themſelves are alſo matters of commerce, and therefore increaſe or decreaſe in their value by their plenty or ſcarceneſs.

It may ſeem to belong to the ruling part of any ſociety to fix the value of gold and ſilver, as ſigns of the value of commodities—and no doubt they do fix it nominally in their dominions. But in this they are obliged to be ſtrictly attentive to the value of theſe metals as a commodity from their plenty or ſcarceneſs, otherwiſe their regulations will be of little force—other nations will pay no regard to the nominal value of any particular country, and even in internal commerce, the ſubject would fix a value upon the ſigns according to their plenty.

It is as prejudicial to commerce to make the nominal value of the coin of any country too ſmall as too great.

We ſhall cloſe this part of the ſubject by ſpeaking a little of the

Rights of Neceſſity, and common Rights.

Theſe are certain powers aſſumed both by private perſons and communities, which are ſuppoſed to be authoriſed by the neceſſity of the caſe, and ſupported by the great law of reaſon.

There will remain a great number of caſes in which thoſe rights of neceſſity are to be uſed, even in the beſt regulated civil ſociety, and after the moſt mature delibera-

tion and foreſight of probable events, and proviſion for them by ſpecific laws.

Were a man periſhing with hunger, and denied food by a perſon who could eaſily afford it him, here the rights of neceſſity would juſtify him in taking it by violence. Were a city on fire, and the blowing up of an houſe would ſave the far greater part, though the owner was unwilling, men would think themſelves juſtified in doing it whether he would or not. Much more would men, in caſes of urgent neceſſity, make free with the property of others without aſking their conſent, but preſuming upon it.

In our own government, where, by the love of liberty general among the people, and the nature of the conſtitutions, as many particulars have been determined by ſpecial laws as in any government in the world—yet inſtances of the rights of neceſſity occur every day. If I ſee one man rob another upon the highway, or am informed of it, if I have courage and ability I purſue the robber, and apprehend him without any warrant, and carry him before a magiſtrate, to get a warrant for what I have already done. Nothing is more common in Britain than to force people to ſell their inheritance or a part of it, to make a road or ſtreet ſtraight or commodious. In this inſtance it is not ſo much neceſſity as great utility.

The queſtion of the greateſt moment here is, whether the eſtabliſhing theſe rights of neceſſity does not derogate from the perfection and immutability of the moral laws. If it be true, that we may break in upon the laws of juſtice for the ſake of utility, is not this admitting the exploded maxim, that we may do evil that good may come. I anſwer, that theſe rights of neceſſity have in general property as their object, or at moſt the life of particular perſons—and it ſeems to be inſeparable from the eſtabliſhment of property in the ſocial ſtate, that our property is to be held only in ſuch manner, and to ſuch a degree, as to be both conſiſtent with, and ſubſervient to, the good of others. And therefore theſe extraordinary caſes are agreeable to the tacit or implied conditions of the ſocial contract.

In rights of neceſſity we are to conſider not only the preſent good or evil, but for all time to come, and particularly the ſafety or danger of the example. Where the repetition of the thing in ſimilar circumſtances would have a fatal effect, it ought not to be done. If a city were under all the miſeries of famine, and a ſhip or two ſhould arrive with grain, the owner of which would not ſell it but at a moſt exhorbitant price, perhaps equity might admit that they ſhould be compelled; but if any ſuch thing were done, it would prevent others from going near that place again.

It would be of no conſequence to determine theſe rights of neceſſity by law. If the law deſcribed circumſtantially what might be done, it would be no longer a right of neceſſity, but a legal right. To forbid them by law would be either ineffectual or it would aboliſh them altogether, and deprive the ſociety of the benefit of them when the caſes ſhould occur. Things done by the rights of neceſſity are by ſuppoſition illegal, and if the neceſſity does not excuſe, the perſon who pretends them may be puniſhed. If I am aiding in pulling down a man's houſe on pretence of ſtopping a fire, if he afterwards makes it appear that there was not the leaſt occaſion for it, or that I, being his enemy, took the opportunity of this pretence to injure him, he will obtain reparation.

As property, or at moſt life, is concerned in the rights of neceſſity—ſtill the moral laws continue in force. Whatever expreſſes an evil diſpoſition of mind does not fall under the rule, becauſe it can never be neceſſary to the doing of any good. The pretence of its being neceſſary in ſome caſes is generally chimerical, and even were it real, the neceſſity could not juſtify the crime—as ſuppoſe a robber very profane ſhould threaten a man with death unleſs he would blaſpheme God or curſe his parents, &c.

There are certain things called common rights, which the public is ſuppoſed to have over every member: the chief of them are (1) diligence. As a man muſt eat, the community have a right to compel him to be uſeful—and have a right to make laws againſt ſuicide. (2.) They have a right to the diſcovery of uſeful inventions, pro-

vided an adequate price be paid to the diſcoverer. (3) They have a right to inſiſt upon ſuch things as belong to the dignity of human nature. Thus all nations pay reſpect to dead bodies, though there is no other reaſon for it but that we cannot help aſſociating with the body, even dead, the ideas which ariſe from it, and belonged to the whole perſon when alive.

3. The third and laſt object of civil laws is, limiting citizens in the exerciſe of their rights, ſo that they may not be injurious to one another, but that the public good may be promoted.

This includes the giving directions in what way arts and commerce may be carried on, and in ſome ſtates extends as far as the poſſeſſions of private perſons.

It includes the whole of what is called the police of a community—the manner of travelling, building, marketting, time and manner of holding all ſorts of aſſemblies—In arts and commerce, particularly, the police ſhows its power.

It will only be neceſſary here to make a few remarks on the nature and ſpirit of thoſe laws.

1. Thoſe things in themſelves are arbitrary, and mutable, for there is no morality in them but what ariſes from common utility. We may ſometimes do things in a way better than that appointed by law, and yet it is not allowed.

2. Men in general have but a very light ſenſe of the malignity of tranſgreſſing theſe laws, ſuch as running of goods, breaking over a fence, &c.

3. In the beſt conſtitutions ſome ſanctions are appointed for the breach of theſe laws. Wherever a ſtate is founded upon the principles of liberty, ſuch laws are made with ſeverity and executed with ſtrictneſs.

Finally, a man of real probity and virtue adopts theſe laws as a part of his duty to God and the ſociety, and is ſubject not only for wrath, but alſo for conſcience ſake.

RECAPITULATION.

Having gone through the three general diviſions of this ſubject, Ethics, Politics, and Juriſprudence, I ſhall conclude with a few remarks upon the whole, and mention to you the chief writers who have diſtinguiſhed themſelves in this branch of ſcience.

1. You may plainly perceive both how extenſive and how important moral philoſophy is. As to extent, each of the diviſions we have gone through, might have been treated at far greater length. Nor would it be unprofitable to enter into a fuller diſquiſition of many points; but this muſt be left to every ſcholar's inclination and opportunities in future life. Its importance is manifeſt from this circumſtance, that it not only points out perſonal duty, but is related to the whole buſineſs of active life. The languages, and even mathematical and natural knowledge, are but hard words to this ſuperior ſcience.

2. The evidence which attends moral diſquiſitions is of a different kind from that which attends mathematics and natural philoſophy; but it remains as a point to be diſcuſſed, whether it is more uncertain or not. At firſt ſight it appears that authors differ much more, and more eſſentially, on the principles of moral than natural philoſophy. Yet perhaps a time may come when men, treating moral philoſophy as Newton and his ſucceſſors have done natural, may arrive at greater preciſion. It is always ſafer in our reaſonings to trace facts upwards, than to reaſon downwards upon metaphyſical principles. An attempt has been lately made by Beatty, in his Eſſay on Truth, to eſtabliſh certain impreſſions of common ſenſe, as axioms and firſt principles of all our reaſonings on moral ſubjects.

3. The differences about the nature of virtue are not in fact ſo great as they appear: they amount to nearly the ſame thing in the iſſue, when the particulars of a virtuous life come to be enumerated.

4. The different foundations of virtue are many of them, not oppoſite or repugnant to each other, but parts

of one great plan—as benevolence and self-love, &c. They all conspire to found real virtue: the authority of God—the dictates of conscience—public happiness and private interest, all coincide.

5. There is nothing certain or valuable in moral philosophy, but what is perfectly coincident with the scripture, where the glory of God is the first principle of action, arising from the subjection of the creature—where the good of others is the great object of duty, and our own interest the necessary consequence.

In the first dawn of philosophy, men began to write and dispute about virtue. The great inquiry among the ancients was, what was the *summum bonum?* by which it seems they took it for granted, that virtue and happiness were the same thing. The chief combatants here, were the stoics and epicureans. The first insisted that virtue was the summum bonum, that pleasure was no good, and pain no evil: the other said that the summum bonum consisted in pleasure, or rather that pleasure was virtue: the academics and Platonists went a middle way between these.

I am not sensible that there is any thing among the ancients, that wholly corresponds with the modern dispute upon the foundation of virtue.

Since the disputes arose in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, some of the most considerable authors, chiefly British are, Leibnitz, his Theodicee and his letters. Clark's demonstration and his letters. Hutchinson's inquiries into the ideas of beauty and virtue, and his system. Wollaston's religion of nature delineated. Collins on human liberty. Nettleton on virtue and happiness. David Hume's essays. Lord Kaims's essays. Smith's theory of moral sentiments. Reed's inquiry. Balfour's delineation of morality. Butler's analogy and sermons. Balguy's tracts. Theory of agreeable sensations from the French. Beatty on Truth. Essay on virtue and harmony.

To these may be added the whole deistical writers, and the answers written to each of them in particular, a brief account of which may be seen in Leland's view of the deistical writers.

Some of the chief writers upon government and politics, are, Grotius, Puffendorf, Barberac, Cumberland, Selden, Burlamaqui, Hobbes, Machiavel, Harrington, Locke, Sydney, and ſome late books, Monteſquieu's ſpirit of laws; Ferguſon's hiſtory of civil ſociety; Lord Kaims's political eſſays; Grandeur and decay of the Roman empire; Montague's riſe and fall of ancient republics; Goguet's riſe and progreſs of laws, arts and ſciences.

LECTURES

ON

ELOQUENCE.

LECTURES

ON

ELOQUENCE.

GENTLEMEN,

WE are now to enter on the ſtudy of eloquence, or as perhaps it ought to be called, from the manner in which you will find it treated, Compoſition, Taſte and Criticiſm.

Eloquence is undoubtedly a very noble art, and when poſſeſſed in a high degree, has been, I think, in all ages, one of the moſt admired and envied talents. It has not only been admired in all ages, but, if I am not miſtaken, among all ranks. Its power is univerſally felt, and therefore probably the talent more univerſally eſteemed, than either genius or improvement in ſeveral other kinds of human excellence. Military ſkill and political wiſdom, have their admirers, but far inferior in number to thoſe who admire, envy, or would wiſh to imitate, him that has the power of perſuaſion.

Plato in his republic, or idea of a well regulated ſtate, has baniſhed orators, under pretence that their power over the minds of men is dangerous and liable to abuſe. Some moderns have adopted the ſame ſentiments.

Sir Thomas More in his Utopia, I believe, (though I am not certain) has embraced it. But this is a manner

of thinking and reaſoning altogether ſuperficial. It would militate equally againſt all cultivation of the mind, and indeed againſt every human excellence, natural and acquired. They are, and have been, and may be abuſed, by men of vicious diſpoſitions. But how ſhall this be prevented? It is impoſſible. How ſhall it be counteracted? Only by aſſiſting the good in the cultivation of their powers, and then the ſame weapons will be uſed in defence of truth and virtue, with much greater advantage, than they can be in ſupport of falſehood and vice. Learning in general, poſſeſſed by a bad man, is unſpeakably pernicious, and that very thing has ſometimes made weak people ſpeak againſt learning; but it is juſt as abſurd as if in the confines of a country expoſed to hoſtile inroads, the inhabitants ſhould ſay, we will build no forts for protection, becauſe if the enemy get into poſſeſſion of them they will become the means of annoyance; we will uſe no arms for defence, for if the enemy take them from us, they will be turned againſt us.

Perhaps it may be proper to take notice of what the apoſtle Paul ſays, in his firſt epiſtle to the Corinthians, in ſeveral places, particularly from the beginning of the 2d chapter, "and I brethren," &c. and in the 4th chap. 11 verſe, "And my ſpeech, and my preaching was not," &c. I have mentioned this to prevent any of you miſtaking or being prejudiced againſt the ſubject, and ſhall obſerve upon it, that the meaning of the apoſtle in this and other ſimilar paſſages, is fully comprehended in one or more of the following particulars (1) That he came not to the Corinthians with an artful deluſive eloquence, ſuch as the ſophiſts of theſe days made uſe of to varniſh over their fooliſh ſentiments. (2) That he came not to ſhow his ſkill in ſpeaking for and againſt any thing, as many of them did, not to diſcover or communicate truth, but to diſplay their own talents. (3) That the truths he had to communicate needed no ornaments to ſet them off, and were not by any means adapted to the proud ſpirit of the world: and, (4) that he would uſe the greateſt ſelf-denial, and not by any means attempt to recommend himſelf as a man of ability and

learning, but content himſelf with the humble and ſimple doctrine of the croſs. And the truth is, after the higheſt improvement in the art of ſpeaking, there muſt be the greateſt reſerve and ſelf denial in the uſe of it, otherwiſe it will defeat its own purpoſe. Rhetoricians do uſually give it among the very precepts of the art, to appear to be in earneſt, and to have the ſubject or the intereſt of the audience at heart, and not their own fame; and this can never be attained to ſo great perfection as when there is the humility of a true diſciple, and the diſintereſted zeal of a faithful miniſter of Chriſt. That this is not contrary to the moſt diligent application for the improvement of our powers is manifeſt in itſelf, and appears from the many exhortations of the ſame apoſtle to his young diſciples, Timothy and Titus, 1 Tim. iv. 13. "till I come, give attendance," &c. and v. 15. "meditate," &c.

I know not whether any apology is neceſſary for my undertaking to ſpeak on this ſubject, or the manner of treating it. Some may expect that diſcourſes on eloquence ſhould be diſtinguiſhed examples of the art of which they treat. Such may juſt be pleaſed to obſerve, that a cool, plain, and ſimple manner of ſpeaking, is neceſſary in teaching this, as well as every other art. No doubt, a juſtneſs and preciſion of expreſſion, will be of great benefit in theſe diſcourſes, but there will be no need of that high and complete poliſh, that might be expected in what is prepared for publication. Nor would the ſame brevity and conciſeneſs be any advantage to diſcourſes once delivered, that would be reckoned a beauty in what is in every body's hands, and therefore may be often read.

Before entering on the ſtrict and methodical diſcuſſion of the ſubject, I have commonly begun the courſe by two or three preliminary diſcourſes, containing ſuch general obſervations as may be moſt intelligible, and may ſerve to prepare the way for what ſhall be afterwards introduced.

The ſubject of the firſt preliminary diſcourſe ſhall be the following queſtion; whether does art or nature, contribute moſt to the production of a complete orator?

This is a queſtion often aſked, and many things have been ſaid upon it; yet to diſcuſs it as a matter of controverſy, and adduce the arguments on each ſide, in order to a deciſion in favor of the one, and prejudice of the other, I take to be of very little conſequence, or rather improper and abſurd. It ſeems to be juſt as if one ſhould propoſe an inquiry, whether the ſoil, the climate, or the culture, contributes moſt to the production of the crop? Therefore, inſtead of treating the queſtion as if one ſide of it were true, and the other falſe, I ſhall make a few obſervations on the mutual influence of nature and art, in order to your forming juſt apprehenſions of the ſubject, and to direct you in your future conduct and ſtudies.

1. Some degree of natural capacity is evidently neceſſary to the inſtruction or ſtudy of this art, in order to produce any effect. A ſkilful laborer may ſubdue a very ſtubborn, or meliorate a very poor ſoil; but when there is no ſoil at all, as on a bare and ſolid rock, his labor would be impoſſible or fruitleſs. There muſt therefore doubtleſs be ſome capacity, in general, and even ſome turn for this very branch of knowledge. In this ſenſe it is true of every other art, as well as oratory, a man muſt be born to it.

There are ſome ſo deſtitute of oratorical powers, that nothing can poſſibly be made of them. It will be ſtrange however, if this is not eaſily diſcovered by themſelves, and if it does not make the ſtudy as unpleaſant as it is difficult, ſo that they will ſpeedily give it over. I have known ſome examples, but very few, of miniſters, whoſe principal defect was mere barrenneſs of invention. This is exceedingly rare, becauſe the far greateſt number of bad ſpeakers have enough to ſay, ſuch as it is, and generally the more abſurd and incoherent, the greater the abundance.

When ſpeaking on this obſervation, I muſt make one remark, that a total want of capacity for one branch of ſcience, is not inconſiſtent even with a great capacity for another. We ſometimes ſee great mathematicians who make miſerable orators. Nay it is reckoned by ſome of

the beſt judges that this ſtudy is unfriendly to oratory. The definite preciſion of mathematical ideas, which may all be ultimately referred to menſuration, ſeems to be contrary to the freedom and boldneſs of imagination, in which the ſtrength of oratory lies. There are, however, exceptions to this in fact. Dr. Clark and Dr. Barrow, two of the moſt eminent mathematicians of the laſt age, were alſo eminent orators, that is to ſay, the firſt was a very accurate writer, the other a very fervent preacher.

I have only further to obſerve, that many have thought academical teaching not to be favorable to oratory; that is to ſay, thoſe who are accuſtomed to the cool diſpaſſionate manner of ſpeaking, uſual and neceſſary in the inſtruction of youth, frequently loſe a good deal of that fire and impetuoſity which they might naturally poſſeſs, and which is of ſo much importance in ſpeaking to a large and promiſcuous aſſembly.

2. To make what is called a complete orator, very great natural powers are neceſſary, and great cultivation too. The truth is, when we ſpeak of a complete orator, we generally form an idea of perfection ſuperior to any thing that ever exiſted, by aſſembling together all the excellencies of every kind that have been ſeen in different perſons, or that we are able from what we have ſeen to to form an imagination of. We can eaſily enumerate many of theſe, for example, great penetration of mind—great literature and extenſive knowledge—a ſtrong and lively imagination reined in by a correctneſs of judgment, a rich invention, and retentive memory, tenderneſs and ſenſibility of affection, an acquaintance with the world, and a thorough knowledge of the human heart. To theſe we muſt add all external perfections, an open countenance, a graceful carriage, a clear articulate ſtrong melodious voice. There is not one of theſe but is capable of great improvement by application and ſtudy, as well as by much practice. In all the great orators of whom we read, there appears to have been an union of natural talents and acquired ſkill, Pericles, Demoſthenes, Cicero, Hortentius. To theſe you may add all the ſpeakers mentioned by Cicero and Quintilian,

taking their talents and performances to have been as related by theſe authors.

3. Perhaps the moſt extraordinary appearances in this, as well as in other branches, have been from nature wholly, or but with little ſtudy. Theſe ſpontaneous productions are as ſo many prodigies. It is commonly believed that the orators and ſages at the firſt formation of ſociety, were more powerful in their elocution than in more poliſhed times. This, however, I am apt to think, is in ſome degree founded on a miſtake. There might be more extraordinary effects of eloquence, becauſe the ignorant or ſuperſtitious herd were then more eaſily moved, but this was as much owing to the ſtate of the audience as the power of the ſpeakers. The ſame fire that would burn a heap of dry bruſh, would not make any impreſſion upon a heap of green logs. It might alſo be owing to another circumſtance, which I ſhall have occaſion afterwards to explain more fully, the narrowneſs of language and the uſe of figures, which have ſo great an effect upon the imagination.

But allowing very great force to uncultivated prodigies of genius in every kind, I am apt to think it is leſs powerful, comparatively ſpeaking, in oratory than in poetry. It has been an old ſaying, Poeta naſcitur & non fit. There are two reaſons why the poetry of nature, without art, ſeems to be ſo much admired. 1. That in ſuch a poet a ſtrong unbounded fancy muſt be the prevailing character, and this is what chiefly captivates the mind. It muſt be a very ſtrong inward impulſe that induces a man to become a poet without example, and without inſtruction. 2. It is found in fact that the knowledge of the rules of art ſome how cramps and deters the mind, and reſtrains that boldneſs, or happy extravagance, that gives ſuch general delight. It is an obſervation of an ingenious author, that in no poliſhed nation after the rules of criticiſm were fully ſettled and generally underſtood, was there ever any great work of genius produced. This, however, muſt be underſtood chiefly of what are called the higher ſpecies of poetry, epic poetry and tragedy, and for the reaſons juſt now given, it muſt be ſo in them. Ho-

mer is the great poet of nature, and it is generally thought that there is greater fire in him than in Virgil, juſt becauſe he lived at a time when the rules of writing were unknown. The ſame thing is ſaid of Shakeſpear, of our own country, and perhaps the late diſcovered poems of Oſſian may be conſidered as another example. After all, perhaps the compariſon made between the effects of nature and art, is at bottom wrong, and that they produce beauties of different kinds—A wild uncultivated foreſt, a vaſt precipice, or ſteep cataract or waterfall, is ſuppoſed to be an object more auguſt and ſtriking, than any ornaments produced by human ſkill. The order and ſymmetry however, of architecture and gardening are highly pleaſing, and ought not properly to be compared with the other, as pleaſing the imagination in a different degree, ſo much as in a different kind.

The effects of the poetry of nature, therefore in one view are very great, and continue to be ſo in all ages, becauſe they touch the ſoul in one way, which continues to be univerſally felt: but I doubt much whether eloquence ever arrived at much excellence, without conſiderable ſtudy, or at leaſt previous patterns, on which to form. The firſt great poets were before all criticiſm, and before even the poliſhing of human manners; but the firſt great orators appeared in improved, civilized ſtates, and were the conſequence of the knowledge of mankind, and the ſtudy of the human heart.

4. When perſons are meanly qualified in point of natural capacity for any art, it is not very proper to attempt to inſtruct them in it. It is not only difficult to inſtruct thoſe who have a radical incapacity for any ſtudy, but ſometimes they are much the worſe for application, juſt as fine clothes and a courtly dreſs upon a clown, renders him unſpeakably ridiculous. Some who are utterly void of taſte for ſpeaking, after long ſtudy, and ſometimes even by great literature, become more obſcure, more tedious, and more given to ſwelling and bombaſt than the moſt uncultivated perſon in the world. The want of a fund of good ſenſe and genuine taſte, makes ignorant perſons fools, and ſcholars pedants. A plain man will tell you of

taking a purge or a dose of physic, and you neither mistake him nor laugh at him. A quack of a physician will tell you of a mucilaginous decoction, to smooth the acid particles, and carry off the acrimonious matter that corrodes and irritates the internal coats of the stomach.

5. In the middle regions of genius, there are often to be found those who reap the greatest benefit from education and study. They improve their powers by exercise. and it is surprising to think what advances are to be made by the force of resolution and application. I might give you many examples of this in the annals of literature; but the one most suited to our purpose is, that Domosthenes himself is said at first to have labored under almost insuperable difficulties: it is said he could not even pronounce at first, all the letters of the Greek alphabet, particularly the letter R, the first letter of his art, as the critics have called it.

Persons of the middle degrees of capacity, do also, perhaps generally, fill the most useful and important stations in human life. A very great genius, is often like a very fine flower, to be wondered at, but of little service either for food or medicine. A very great genius is also often accompanied with certain irregularities, so that we only consider with regret, what he might have been, if the lively sallies of his imagination had been reined in a little, and kept under the direction of sober judgment.

On the whole, you may plainly perceive what great encouragement there is for diligence in your studies, and be persuaded to attend to the instructions to be given you on this subject in particular, with assiduity and care.

LECTURE II.

IN this, which as the former, I consider as a preliminary discourse, I will endeavor to give you some general rules, which as they belong equally to all sorts of writing, would not come in so properly under the divisions of the subject.

1. Study and imitate the greateſt examples. Get the moſt approved authors for compoſition, read them often and with care. Imitation is what commonly give us our firſt ideas upon any ſubject. It is by example that ambition is kindled, and youth prompted to excel. It is by remarks upon actual productions, that criticiſm itſelf is formed. Men were not firſt taught by maſters to ſpeak, either in oratory or poeſy; but they firſt felt the impulſe, and did as they could, and their reflection and obſervation, by making the compariſon, found out what was beſt. And after the exiſtence of precepts, it is by examples that precepts are made plain and intelligible. An acquaintance with authors, will alſo be the beſt mean of determining what is your own turn and capacity, for you will probably moſt reliſh thoſe writers and that manner, that you are beſt able to imitate.

For this purpoſe, let the beſt authors be choſen, ancient and modern. A controverſy has often riſen among critics and men of letters, upon the preference being due to ancient or modern writers. This queſtion was debated ex profeſſo, in the laſt age, and ſome very great men engaged in it. The famous M. Fenelon, arch-biſhop of Cambray, has written a treatiſe upon it, called the Wars of the Poets; and Dean Swift wrote his account of the battle of the books in St. James's library, on the ſame ſubject. I reckon it is wrong to be opinionative in ſuch a controverſy, and very eaſy to puſh it to exceſs on both ſides. No doubt the few remains of remote antiquity, have ſurvived the wrecks of time, in a great meaſure by their excellence itſelf, and therefore will always be conſidered as ſtandards. And as they are chiefly works of imagination that have been ſo preſerved, and true taſte is the ſame in all ages, they muſt deſerve real eſteem, and this will be ſomewhat augmented, by the veneration felt for their antiquity itſelf. Homer is the firſt and great pattern of writing, to whom the higheſt commendations have been given in every age. Horace ſays, Vos exemplaria Greca (meaning chiefly Homer) nocturna verſate manu, verſate diurna; and Mr. Pope ſays,

" Be Homer's works your ſtudy and delight,
" Read him by day, and meditate by night."

Now the beauties of Homer we are eaſily capable of perceiving, though perhaps not his faults. The beauty of a deſcription, the force of a ſimilitude, we can plainly ſee; but whether he always adhered to truth and nature, we cannot tell, becauſe, we have no other way of knowing the manners and cuſtoms of his times but from what he has written.

The powers of mankind, however, are certainly the ſame in all ages, but change of circumſtances may create diverſity in the appearance and productions of genius. Theſe circumſtances tend to produce excellence of different kinds. The boldneſs, and almoſt exceſſive flights of imagination in uncultivated times, give way to beauties of a different nature, to order, judgment and preciſion. A maſterly judgment will endeavor to underſtand the reaſons on both ſides. It is certain, however, that there are great and excellent patterns to form upon both ancient and modern. And it is very proper for young perſons to read authors, after they have heard criticiſms and remarks made upon them. Theſe criticiſms you may take at firſt either from books or converſation. Try if you can obſerve the genius, or peculiar and characteriſtic turn of an author, not only his excellencies, but wherein they are peculiar to him, and different from thoſe of others. Cicero is flowing, fervent, ornate—Somewhat vain and oſtentatious, but maſterly in his way. Demoſthenes is ſimple, cloſe, nervous, rapid and irreſiſtible. Livy has a bewitching knack of telling a ſtory, he is ſo expreſſive and deſcriptive, that one cannot help being pleaſed with it, even after ſeveral times reading.

Salluſt excels in giving characters, which he ſtrikes off in ſingle epithets, or very conciſe remarks. Tacitus is chiefly remarkable for judicious and ſagacious obſervations on human life; and Xenophon is ſuperior to almoſt every author in dignity, elegance, and ſweetneſs in the narration.

Of modern authors in our own language, Mr. Addiſon is a noble pattern of elegance, dignity and ſimplicity. Swift in his political pieces, writes with great ſtrength and force, and is perhaps a pattern of ſtile, which has ſcarcely been exceeded ſince his time. Hervey in his meditations has a great deal of very lively and animated deſcription, but it is ſo highly ornamented, that it is ſomewhat dangerous in the imitation. Dr. Robertſon in his hiſtory, has as juſt a mixture of ſtrength and elegance, as any other author I know in the Engliſh language. I cannot help here cautioning you againſt one modern author of ſome eminence, Johnſon, the author of the Rambler. He is ſo ſtiff and abſtracted in his manner,and ſuch a lover of hard words, that he is the worſt pattern for young perſons that can be named.

It has been given ſometimes as a rule, to form one's ſelf upon a particular author, who may be moſt agreeable to a ſtudent's taſte, and perhaps congenial (if I may ſpeak ſo) to his capacity. It is pretty common to fall into this without deſign, by a natural propenſity. It is ſaid that Demoſthenes wrote over the hiſtory of Thucydides eight times, that he might the more effectually form himſelf to his ſtyle and manner. I cannot ſay I would recommend this, it ſeems to be too much honor to give to any one perſon. I would not be guilty of idolatry of any kind. A comprehenſive knowledge of many authors, or at leaſt a conſiderable number of the beſt, is certainly far preferable. If there be any advantage in particular imitation it is that it is the eaſieſt way of coming to a fixed or formed ſtyle. One will ſoon run into an imitation of an author with whom he is much converſant, and of whom he is a great admirer, and in this view, to ſome perſons of moderate capacity, it may not be an improper method. But perſons of real and original genius, ſhould be rather above ſuch a practice, as it will certainly make them fall ſhort of what they would otherwiſe attain.

To this we may add, that particular imitation is liable to ſeveral very great dangers. (1) It leads to ſervility of imitation. Such perſon often may be ſaid to borrow the

piece, inſtead of imitating the pattern. When a ſervile imitation is perceived, which it always will be, it is certain to be deſpiſed. Even a manner ever ſo excellent, if merely a copy, brings no credit to a ſpeaker. And if a writer retail the very ſentiments and language of another, it is conſidered as an abſurdity. (2) Servile imitation leads to copying defects. There niether is, nor ever was any ſpeaker or writer free from defects or blemiſhes of ſome kind. Yet ſervile imitators never fail to copy the defects as well as beauties. I ſhould ſuppoſe that any one who made Cicero his particular model, would very probably transfuſe a proportion of his vanity and oſtentation, and probably more of that than of his fire.

But of all ſorts of imitation the moſt dangerous is the imitation of living ſpeakers, and yet to this young ſcholars are moſt prone, ſometimes by deſign, and ſometimes quite inſenſibly. It is attended in the higheſt degree with the diſadvantage of copying defects. In living ſpeakers, there are not only peculiarities of ſtyle and blemiſhes in compoſition to copy, but in looks, tone and geſture. It is a matter of conſtant experience, that imitators catch the blemiſhes eaſieſt, and retain them longeſt. And it is to be obſerved, that defects, when they are natural and undeſigned, appear very inconſiderable; but when they are copied and adopted voluntarily, we cannot help deſpiſing the folly and abſurdity of one that judges ſo ill. Further, when defects are occaſional and undeſigned, they are generally inconſiderable; but when they are copied, they are commonly aggravated and over-charged, and ſo appear quite monſtrous. This muſt be ſo; for even the very beſt manner looks ſilly in the imitator, although juſt and graceful in the original.

2. An excellent general rule is to accuſtom yourſelves early and much to compoſition, and exerciſe in pronunciation. Practice is neceſſary in order to learn any thing to perfection. There is ſomething to be learned from practice, which no inſtruction can impart. It is ſo in every other art as well as this—mathematics, geometry and in navigation; after you have learned the theory in the moſt perfect manner, there is ſtill a nameleſs ſomething, which

nothing but experience can beſtow. You muſt not wait till you are maſters of the rules of art before you begin to put them in practice. Exerciſe muſt go hand in hand with inſtruction, that the one may give meaning, force and direction to the other. I do not mean that you ſhould be fond of entering very ſoon upon real life, but that you ſhould be aſſiduous in preparatory exerciſes. This is a rule given by Cicero in his book De Oratore, which he reckons of great importance—*Scribendum quam plurimum*, and he declares it to have been his own practice.

Since we are upon private exerciſes of compoſition, it may perhaps give you a clearer view of the matter to mention ſome of the various ways in which it may be ſeparately tried. It may be tried in tranſlation, perhaps it may be beſt to try it firſt here. Tranſlation will accuſtom you to attend to the various idioms of language, and to underſtand the genius of your own language: for when tranſlating you will ſpeedily find that to render out of any one language into another, ad verbum, would be very ſorry compoſition. It may be tried alſo in narration. This I think ſhould be the next ſtep to tranſlation, to learn to give a naked account of facts with ſimplicity and preciſion. This, alſo, though certainly in itſelf more obvious and eaſier than ſome other kinds, yet it is by no means ſo eaſy as ſome imagine. Imitation of a particular paſſage, or compoſition of ſome author, by writing upon ſomething quite ſimilar, may perhaps be the next in order. To underſtand what this is, you need only look into an admirable example of it in poetry, Mr. Pope's imitation of a ſatire in Horace, beginning Quæ virtus & quanta, &c. After this comes deſcription, painting ſcenes, or drawing characters. Then argumentation: And, laſtly, perſuaſion. I believe it would be a great improvement of the laudable practice in this college of daily orations, if they were choſen with more judgment, and better ſuited to the performers. Almoſt all the pieces we have delivered to us are of the laſt or higheſt kind, warm paſſionate declamations. It is no wonder that ſome ſhould perform theſe ill, who have never tried the plainer manner of ſimple narration. Suppoſing a ſtudent to have tried all theſe

ways of compoſition for his own improvement, would he not be by that means ſenſible in what way he is moſt able to excel? as alſo having made trial of them ſeparately, he is more able to vary his diction, and give compaſs to his diſcourſe upon a general ſubject. Theſe are like an analyſis or ſimple diviſion of compoſition; and as perſons read beſt who have been firſt taught to reſolve words into ſyllables, and ſyllables into letters, ſo the eaſieſt and completeſt way of any to compoſition, is to begin it in this order.

In ſuch exerciſes let me by all means recommend to you, early to acquire, and always to preſerve a certain patience and reſolution of mind, which will enable you to apply with vigor, not only for a time, but to review and correct your pieces, and bring them to ſome degree of perfection, and your taſte to ſome degree of accuracy. To explain this a little, there are three things equally contrary to it, and perhaps equally prejudicial. (1.) Mere weakneſs and want of courage, which finding one attempt unſucceſsful, will hardly be brought to make another. When a young perſon firſt goes to exerciſe himſelf in compoſition, he finds the thing ſo uncouth and difficult, that he is apt to conſider it as altogether impoſſible. (2.) There is a fault contrary to this, a vanity of mind, which is ſo pleaſed with any thing it does, as neither to ſee its own faults, nor be willing to hear them. There are ſome who, from the beginning of life, think it a great pity that any of their productions ſhould be blotted or eraſed. It is not to be ſuppoſed that they will make great progreſs in knowledge or taſte. (3.) There is another ſort, perhaps diſtinct from both, who are of a looſe, deſultory diſpoſition, ſo unſtaid that they cannot ſpend long enough time upon any thing to do it well, or ſometimes even to bring it to a concluſion. They will begin an eſſay upon a ſubject, but are preſently out of conceit with it, and therefore will do it very careleſsly, or before it is finiſhed, muſt away to another, which ſtruck their fancy more lately.

That ſteady application which I have recommended ſome of the ancients were very remarkable for. Some of them indeed ſeemed to carry it to an exceſs. They would

ſometimes ſpend as much time in poliſhing an epigram, or little trifling panegyric, as might have been ſufficient for the production of a work of extenſive utility. However, this is not the moſt common error; running over a great deal in a ſuperficial way is the bane of compoſition. Horace, with his uſual elegance, ridicules this diſpoſition, when he ſays, *Detur nobis locus*, &c. and ſomewhere elſe he brings in a vain-glorious poet, boaſting how many verſes he had made, or could make, while ſtanding upon one foot.

LECTURE III.

IN this diſcourſe I intend to finiſh what I began in the laſt, viz. laying down ſome general rules to form the taſte and direct the conduct of a ſtudent.

3. Be careful to acquaint yourſelves well, and to be as perfect as poſſible in the branches that are ſubordinate to the ſtudy of eloquence. Theſe, becauſe they ought to be learned in the earlieſt ſtages, if they are then neglected, ſome are unwilling or aſhamed to go back to them. What I have here in view chiefly, are the grammar, orthography, and punctuation of the Engliſh language. It is not uncommon to find orators of conſiderable name, both in the pulpit and at the bar, far from being accurate in point of grammar. This is evidently a very great blemiſh. Perhaps it may be occaſioned in ſome meaſure by the Engliſh ſeldom or never being taught grammatically to children. But thoſe who have learned the principles of grammar, in the Greek and Latin languages, ſhould be more ready to attend to it. I am ſenſible that the grammar of every language is ultimately fixed by cuſtom; with regard to which, Horace ſays, Quem penes arbitrium eſt, &c. But even here we muſt attend to the meaning of the ſentiment. It is not the cuſtom of the vulgar that eſtabliſhes either the grammar or pronunciation of any language, but that which is received and eſtabliſhed by the beſt writers. You

will ſay, how do theſe writers determine themſelves? Are not they alſo guided by practice? They are in a great meaſure, and it is generally ſaid, that the practice of the capital of a nation, or of the court in that capital, ſettles the grammar. This muſt in ſubſtance be agreed to, yet judgment and analogy will frequently ſuggeſt improvements, and introduce a good, or aboliſh an ill cuſtom. You muſt not ſuppoſe, that all the phraſes of the vulgar in London, are therefore agreeable to the grammar of the Engliſh, or even that at court, all the nobility, male and female, ſpeak with perfect propriety. It is in the laſt reſort, the men of literature, particularly the authors, who taking cuſtom as a general rule, give it all the direction they can, by their reaſoning and example.

To make you underſtand this by ſome inſtances, you ſee Mr. Addiſon, Dean Swift, and Mr. Pope, have endeavored to attend to the genius of the Engliſh language, to ſhow where it was harſh and unpoliſhed, and where improprieties might be corrected, and they have ſucceeded in a great meaſure. It was obſerved by all thoſe great men, that the Engliſh, and all the northern languages are harſh, by the numbers of conſonants meeting without intervening vowels, therefore, that it is a great barbariſm to ſtrike out the vowels that we have, as in theſe words, don't, can't, didn't, wouldn't, ſhouldn't, rebuk'd, drudg'd, fledg'd. Several of theſe words may yet be heard in ſome places, and I have even ſeen them in print in America; but no good ſpeaker or tolerable writer would uſe them in Great Britain. I give another example when the ſenſe and analogy of the word ſuggeſts the improvement. Averſe and averſion, were often formerly uſed with *to* or *at*: he is very averſe to it; he has a great averſion at it. But as averſe properly ſignifies turned away, it ſeems an evident improvement, to ſay averſe from. What I mean by this obſervation, is to turn your attention to ſuch remarks, when you meet with them in reading or converſation.

I will make an obſervation or two more. It is of ſome importance to attend to the uſe of words, nearly related, or in ſome degree ſynonymous. It is not uncommon to hear people ſay a man is incident to ſuch or ſuch a thing—

The evil is incident to the perſon—the perſon liable to the evil, or ſubject to it: this may be ſeen by the original meaning of the word, of Latin derivation, and ſignifies to fall upon. The word *notify*, is often uſed wrong, particularly in America: they ſpeak of notifying the public; that is to ſay, making known the public—Inſtead of this, we ſhould ſay notify any thing, (or make it known) to the public. You advertiſe a perſon, or inform him of a thing—acquaint him with it. The verb *consist*, in Engliſh, has two diſtinct meanings, and two conſtructions: when it ſignifies to agree or correſpond, it is joined to *with*. It conſiſts *with* my knowledge. When it ſignifies to compoſe or make up a total, it is conſtructed either with *in* or *of*; as his eſtate conſiſts *of*, or *in* houſes, lands, &c. *This* and *that*, and *these* and *those*, when together in a ſentence, are uſed with diſtinction; *this* and *these* for the neareſt, and *that* and *those*, for the moſt remote antecedent; but otherwiſe, *these* and *those* are uſed indiſcriminately, but *those* more frequently—as *those authors who are of different opinions*.

In all matters doubtful, you ought to obſerve how the current of good authors go. So far as I have been able to obſerve, collective words in Engliſh, are indifferently conſtructed either with a verb ſingular or plural, as number, multitude, part—a great number were preſent, or was preſent, though I ſhould prefer the laſt.—

As to orthography, it is of the utmoſt moment, not but that a man may be ſuppoſed to ſpeak, though he cannot ſpell; but becauſe a public ſpeaker muſt be always in ſome degree, converſant in public life, and then bad ſpelling is exceedingly reproachful. It is not only neceſſary to underſtand in all ordinary caſes, the orthography of our own language, but a ſcholar and critic, I think, ſhould be able to obſerve the variations that have been made in ſpelling from time to time. Between thirty and forty years ago, an attempt was made to alter the ſpelling of the Engliſh language very conſiderably, by bringing it nearer to the way of pronouncing, but it did not ſucceed, being oppoſed by ſome of the greateſt eminence, as likely to deſtroy

or hide the etymology of words. There have ſome ſmall alterations obtained a good deal in my remembrance, ſuch as taking away the final k in public, eccleſiaſtic, &c. There is alſo juſt now, an attempt making to change the ſpelling of ſeveral words—I have ſeen an example of it in a very late edition of Middleton's life of Cicero; ſuch as revele, repete, explane—honor, favor, candor, &c. this ſeems upon the principle of bringing words nearer to their Latin derivation.

Punctuation is a thing that a ſcholar ſhould ſtrive to underſtand a little; though there are few gentlemen or ſcholars who uſe it much, either in letters or in their compoſition. The reaſon of this is, that it is looked upon as too formal, and unneceſſary to uſe it in writing letters, except a full ſtop. It is always the beſt language that has leaſt need of points to be underſtood. Points are, I believe, a modern invention, ſubſequent to the invention of printing; very uſeful however, in teaching young perſons to read with proper pauſes. Another reaſon why points are little uſed in private writing, is, that ſuch papers as are ſent to the preſs, (in Britain) do not need them, the printers themſelves underſtanding that matter at leaſt as well, if not better than any writer.

4. It is a good rule, to obſerve early, and ſtudy to guard againſt ſome of the moſt remarkable blemiſhes in writing and ſpeaking, which are fallen into by deſign or accident, and continued by habit. It is not difficult for any perſon, as ſoon as he begins to obſerve and reflect, to diſcover theſe in others, and as he will perceive the abſurdity clearly in them, let him be very careful to find out whether there is not ſomething of the ſame kind in himſelf. That you may underſtand what I mean, I will mention ſome particulars.

1. *Peculiar phraſes.*—Such as have nothing in them but what is juſt and decent and proper, when uſed once, or now and then; but when a ſpeaker falls ſo into any of them, that the practice is known for his own, and he is known by it, they become unſpeakably ridiculous. It is very difficult to avoid ſomething of this kind; there are

few, if any, but in common diſcourſe, uſe ſome phraſes more than others. A cautious perſon, as ſoon as he perceives a habit of uſing any one coming upon him, will endeavor to alter or avoid it. Even the greateſt men are not wholly free from this defect. It is obſerved of Cicero, that *esse videatur* occurs in almoſt every three or four ſentences, be the ſubject what it will. I knew a preacher that uſed the word *sedate*, ſo very frequently, that he was called generally where he was known, by the name of the *sedate preacher*. I ſay the ſame thing of particular motions and geſtures, which if they be in any degree out of the way, are a great blemiſh in a ſpeaker: both the one and the other of theſe, are commonly at firſt, taken up as graces, and retained ſo long in that view, that they acquire an irreſiſtible power from habit.

2. Another blemiſh of this kind, is uſing improper epithets. This is very common: ſome, eſpecially young perſons, are apt to think a diſcourſe lean and poor, unleſs there be a great number of epithets; and as they will let no ſubſtantive go without an adjective, it is a great chance that ſome of them are improper: they cannot ſay the ſky, without the azure ſky, or the lofty ſky, or the wide expanded ſky; and though all theſe epithets may belong to the ſky, they may not be equally proper in the place where they are introduced. A certain gentleman of no mean rank in Great Britain, in drawing an addreſs from a borough to his majeſty, on the peace, told him, that the terror of his arms had ſpread to the moſt diſtant parts of the *terraqueous* globe: now, though it be certainly true that the globe is terraqueous, it was exceedingly ridiculous to tell the king ſo; it looked as if his majeſty were a boy, and the borough magiſtrates were teaching him; or they themſelves were boys, who had juſt learned the firſt leſſon in geography, that the globe conſiſts of land and water, and therefore were deſirous of letting it be known that they were ſo far advanced.

3. Another viſible blemiſh is a multitude of unneceſſary words of any kind, particularly the vain repetition of ſynonymous phraſes. Some do not think their ſentences full and round enough, without a number of theſe phraſes. But

though it be true, that there is a fulneſs of a ſentence and the clauſes of a ſentence which is neceſſary to pleaſe the ear, yet it is but an ill way to make up the ſhape with what is without ſenſe or force. The moſt common of this kind are the double epithets, which men are led into by the introduction of words derived from the Latin or Greek into the Engliſh language. Theſe words differing in ſound, are often coupled together, as if different in meaning alſo—As happineſs and felicity,—fruition and enjoyment,—greatneſs and magnificence,—eaſe and facility,—way and manner,—end and concluſion,—ſmall and minute,—bountiful and liberal, &c. Sometimes from your loſty ſpeakers, we hear a whole ſtring of words, of ſo little difference in meaning, that it is almoſt impoſſible to perceive it. Thus I have lately heard, "This grand, capital, im-"portant, and fundamental truth."—All proper epithets, and though any one of them would have made the diſcourſe nervous, as well as juſt, by the addition of them all, it becomes ſwelled and ſilly.*

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* *List of ſynonymous terms frequently to be met with.*

Speakers and writers,
Motives and arguments,
Benefit and advantage,
Small and minute,
Bountiful and liberal,
Right and title,
Order and method,
Sharp and acute,
Pain and anguiſh,
Moment and importance,
Delight and ſatisfaction,
Joy and pleaſure,
Profit and advantage,
Reſolution and purpoſe,
Juſtice and equity,
Truth and ſincerity,
Wealth and riches,
Penury and want,
Worth and value,
Laſting and abiding,
Command and order,
Order and appoint,
Sin and Guilt,
Cheerfulneſs and alacrity,
Greatneſs and magnificence,
Joy and delight,
Fruition and enjoyment,
Juſt and righteous,
End and deſign,
Open and explain,
Laſting and durable,
Clear and manifeſt,
Marks and ſigns,
Plain and perſpicuous,
Eaſe and facility,
End and concluſion,

4. Vulgariſms. I have been ſurpriſed to ſee ſome perſons of education and character, introduce the mere vulgariſms of diſcourſe in the pulpit, or at the bar, ſuch as I an't I can't, I ſhan't. An author who entitles his book Lexiphanes, and has very ſucceſsfully expoſed Johnſon's long and hard words, let ſlip a vulgariſm into his own diſcourſe, for which he was ſeverely handled by the reviewers. *Between you and I.* *I* there is a governed caſe, and if it were to be uſed, it ſhould be, between you and me. But the truth is, the phraſe is altogether a vulgariſm, and therefore not to be uſed, except in particular circumſtances, deſcribing familiar chat. There are alſo certain cant phraſes which come into repute or uſe in the courſe and the changes of faſhion.

Theſe have been ſufficiently expoſed by Swift and Addiſon, and therefore I ſhall ſay nothing at all further on them, at preſent, as an opportunity will afterwards occur of mentioning them to advantage.

5. The fifth and laſt general rule I ſhall juſt mention is, to follow nature. This is a rule often given, and greatly inſiſted on by the ancients. Every body has

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Odious and hateful	A final iſſue,
Poor and indigent,	Motives and reaſons,
Order and regularity	Diminiſhed and leſſened,
Rules and regulations,	Excellence and perfection,
Cauſes and reaſons,	Benevolence and goodwill,
Uſeful and profitable,	Demonſtrate and prove,
Amiable and lovely	Cover and conceal,
Wife and prudent,	Fooliſh and unwiſe.

Terms and Phrases to be noted for remarks.

Happifying,—ſuſceptive,—fellow-country-man—felicitos—to be found in the Monitor.

"Unſexed thy mind" in a poem,

"Senſibilities," Aikin's Magazine, Oct. vol. 1. 468—9.

"Theſe commendations will not I am perſuaded make you vain and *coxcomical.*

Knickknackically, ſimplify, domeſticate, pultpitically.

heard of it, nay, ſometimes thoſe who have not heard of it, will ſpeak as if they had, and ſay, "This was quite natural. This was altogether unnatural." But it is ſomewhat difficult to underſtand. Nature ſeems in this rule to be oppoſed to art. Is following nature, then, to do as untaught perſons generally do? Will the moſt ignorant perſons make the moſt plain and the beſt connected diſcourſe? Will they tell a ſtory with the moſt genuine ſimplicity, and at the ſame time with perſpicuity? We find it is quite otherwiſe. Perhaps it would be beſt to ſay it is following truth, or following that which is eaſieſt and plaineſt, and probably would be followed by all, but for affectation.

On this ſubject I can think of nothing ſo good as to ſay, realize and ſuppoſe you ſaw the thing you would deſcribe, and put yourſelf in the very ſtate of him whoſe ſentiments you would ſpeak. Clear conceptions make diſtinct expreſſions, and reality is a great aſſiſtant to invention. If you were bid to ſtudy a ſubject abſtractly, it would be with great difficulty that things proper and ſuitable to it would come into your mind. But if you, yourſelf were in the ſituation that is to be ſuppoſed, the ſentiments pertinent to it would croud upon you immediately. Let me try to make this familiar by an example, ſuppoſe I were to aſk any of you juſt now, what are the circumſtances that aggravate ſin, or make it more heinous, and deſerving of ſevere puniſhment: it is highly probable he would either be at a loſs altogether, or at leaſt would omit many of them. But if any of you had received an injury from another, in explaining of it, he would not fail to come over them every one. He would ſay it was unprovoked.—If he had done him ſervice, he would not fail to upbraid him with it, and nothing would be forgotten between the two, that could aggravate the crime.

Suppoſing the reality of every thing, alſo, ſerves particularly to deliver a ſpeaker from affected ornaments, and every thing in language or carriage that is improper. If you were pleading the cauſe of one accuſed of a capital crime, it would be beſt to ſuppoſe that you your-

ſelf were the accuſed perſon, and that you were ſpeaking for your own life. This would give an earneſtneſs of ſpirit, and a juſtneſs and correctneſs to the manner, infinitely diſtant from that theatrical pomp, which is ſo properly ſaid to be a departure from the ſimplicity of nature.

LECTURE IV.

HAVING given you ſome preliminary diſcourſes on ſuch points as I thought would ſerve to prepare you for what might be afterwards ſaid, I proceed to treat the ſubject more methodically and more fully. There are various ways of dividing the ſubject, which yet may each of them be ſaid to take in the whole, in one way or other. Several of theſe muſt be combined together; as it is not ſufficient to view a building only from one ſtation. If you would underſtand it thoroughly, you muſt view it from different ſtations, and even take it in profile, and learn not only its outward appearance, but its inward ſtructure. The method I have reſolved to follow, and which ſeems to me as complete as any I could fall upon, is this—

I. To treat of language in general, its qualities, and powers—eloquent ſpeech—and its hiſtory and practice as an art.

II. To conſider oratory as divided into its three great kinds, the ſublime—ſimple—and mixed,—their characters—their diſtinctions—their beauties—and their uſes.

III. To conſider it as divided into its conſtituent parts, invention, diſpoſition, ſtile, pronunciation and geſture.

IV. To conſider it as its object is different information, demonſtration, perſuaſion, entertainment.

V. As its ſubject is different. The pulpit, the bar, and the ſenate, or any deliberative aſſembly.

VI. To conſider the ſtructure and parts of a particular diſcourſe, their order, connexion, proportion and ends.

VII. Recapitulation, and an inquiryinto the principles of taſte, or of beauty and gracefulneſs, as applicable not only to oratory, but to all the other (commonly called) the fine arts.

In the firſt place then, I am to treat of language in general, its qualities and powers—eloquent ſpeech—and its hiſtory and practice as an art.

Language is what in a great meaſure diſtinguiſhes man from the inferior creatures. Not but that almoſt all animals have certain ſounds by which they can communicate ſomething to one another. But theſe ſounds are evidently only ſimple, and ſometimes ſingle exertions, differing in one creature from another, according to the different conformation of their organs. Articulate ſpeech has a far greater compaſs, and is able to expreſs not only a vaſt multitude of complex, as well as ſimple ideas; perhaps we may even ſay that articulate ſpeech is little leſs extenſive than thought itſelf, there being hardly any idea that can be formed but it may be expreſſed, and by that means communicated. In this there is a wide and manifeſt diſtinction between the rational and irrational creatures.

Articulate language is intended to communicate our ſentiments one to another. This may be conſidered as fully explained, by ſaying it includes information and perſuaſion. A conception in my mind, when ſpoken, its excellence conſiſts in making another perceive what I perceive, and feel towards it as I feel. They may be afterwards amplified and extended; but theſe two particulars ſhew the true original purpoſe of ſpeech. Eloquence is commonly called the art of perſuaſion, but the other muſt be taken in. We muſt inform before we can perſuade, or if there be any ſuch thing as perſuaſion without information, it is only a blind impulſe.

Articulate ſpeech is repreſenting our ideas by arbitrary ſounds. That is to ſay, there is no real or natural connexion between the ſound and ſignification, but what is the effect of compact and uſe. In this articulate ſpeech is diſtinguiſhed from ſigns or natural ſounds, as alphabetical writing (of which more afterwards) is diſtinguiſhed from

hieroglyphical. Natural ſounds may ſignify joy, fear, anger, but language in general has no ſuch natural connexion with its meaning. The words ſun and moon might have had different meanings, and ſerved the ſame purpoſe. The word *beith* in Hebrew, *oikos* in Greek, *domus* in Latin, *maison* in French, and *houſe* in Engliſh, though all of them different, are equally proper for ſignifying the ſame thing, when once they are fixed by the cuſtom of the ſeveral nations. Some have attempted to reduce the original words of a ſuppoſed original language and even the letters of the alphabet, to a natural reſemblance of the things to be ſignified; but their attempts have been fruitleſs and ridiculous. It was in ancient times a pretty general imagination, that there was a certain language that was original and natural to man; that this was the firſt language in uſe; and that if men were not taught another language by example, they would all ſpeak this language. But experience, after trial had been made by ſeveral curious perſons, ſhowed this imagination to be vain; for thoſe who were brought up without any communication with men, were always dumb, and ſpoke none at all, except ſometimes imitating the natural ſounds of ſome beaſts or birds which they might occaſionally hear. Herodotus's ſtory is either a fable, or it proves nothing, of a king of Egypt having two children nouriſhed by goats, and pronouncing the word Bec, or Beecos, which they ſaid ſignified bread in the Phrygian language. This was a thing merely accidental, if true; yet at any rate of very doubtful authority.

The words in articulate ſpeech therefore are arbitrary, nor is there any poſſibility of their being otherwiſe; for words are only ſounds, and though it is poſſible in ſome few particulars to fix upon words with a natural relation, as for example, perhaps the names of animals might ſometimes be given them with ſome reſemblance of ſound to the natural ſounds which theſe animals utter, yet even this with diſadvantages, as any body may perceive, by trying to make a word that ſhall reſemble the neighing of a horſe, the lowing of a bull, &c. But as to all inanimate viſible objects, it is impoſſible to repreſent them

by ſound; light and ſound, the eye and the ear, being totally different in kind. I can recollect nothing that makes any difficulty in this matter, unleſs that ſome may ſay, how then do you find place for that particular beauty of poetry and other deſcriptions, in making the ſound an echo to the ſenſe? But this is eaſily reſolved. In ſome caſes the paſſions give a modulation to ſound, and in the quantity of the ſyllables, and eaſe or difficulty of pronouncing them, there may be a reſemblance to ſlowneſs and labor, or their oppoſites or both. As in the famous paſſage of Homer *Ton men Tissiphon*; or in Mr. Pope, who exemplifies the rule in giving it.

" 'Tis not enough, no harſhneſs gives offence," &c.

If words are arbitrary, it may be aſked how language came firſt into uſe? in which the opinions are various, but the controverſy is not of any great moment. Some think it was in the ſame way as other creatures exert their natural powers, that man by practice, gradually came to the uſe of ſpeech, and ſettled the meaning of words by cuſtom. Others think that this would either never have happened, or have taken a very long time, and ſuppoſe that their Maker taught them at leaſt ſome degree of practice, which ſhould open the way to a more extenſive uſe of the faculty. And the conſideration that ſounds in language are arbitrary, in ſome degree favors this ſuppoſition, becauſe it may be obſerved that as mankind are capable by inſtruction of the greateſt and moſt multifarious improvement, ſo without inſtruction they are capable of doing leaſt. A human infant when firſt brought forth, is more helpleſs and longer helpleſs than any other animal that we know. It does not ſeem to be of much importance to form a determinate opinion of this queſtion. It occurs in the very ſame way again, and may be reaſoned upon the ſame principles, whether alphabetical writing was an invention and diſcovery of man, or revealed by God. Thoſe who hold the laſt opinion obſerve that hieroglyphic writing, or writing by ſigns or pictures, was before alphabetical, and that the improvement of hieroglyphics does not lead to, but from alphabetical writing. That the one conſiſts of natural em-

blems, and visible signs of sentiments, and the other of arbitrary or artificial signs for simple sounds, so that the more complex you make the hieroglyphic, you differ the more from the alphabet. It seems probable that this, and indeed the radical principles of all great discoveries, were brought out by accident, that is to say, by Providence: therefore it is probable that God gave to our first parents who were found in a state of full growth, all the instruction necessary for proceeding upon, and exercising the faculty of speech, the length that was necessary for the purposes of human life. It is also probable from the analogy of Providence, that he left as much to the exercise of the human powers as experience and application could conveniently supply.

I will not enter much into the formation and construction of language in general. It is formed by a certain number of simple sounds which when variously combined, produce that variety of words which though certainly not strictly infinite, yet have been hitherto inexhausted by all the languages in the world. The letters are divided into vowels and consonants, the first having a sound of themselves, and the other giving only a sort of modification to that sound. Some great philologists are of opinion, that in the Hebrew and several other ancient languages, their whole letters are consonants, tending to mark the different configurations of the organs of sound at the beginning of pronunciation, and the vowels are the sounds themselves, which they say men were taught to adopt by habit, first in speaking, and then in writing, and afterwards were distinguished by marks or signs for the sake of readers. Hence the controversy about the Hebrew points, and indeed reading the dead languages in general, which is attended with great uncertainty, particularly from the following circumstances. Vowels have in general been but five or six in number, which should express all the simple sounds, and yet they do not, and perhaps there is not a language in which there is greater confusion in this matter, than our own, which makes the English so exceedingly difficult for a foreigner to attain. Several English vowels have three or four different sounds,

and as Sheridan ſays, ſome of them the length of five; *I* has three in one word, viz. *infinite*. Theſe things not being neceſſary to my main purpoſe, I only point at them without enlarging.

It is plain that in whatever manner languages were firſt formed, we can eaſily ſee that they came ſlowly and by degrees to perfection. An eminent French author, father Lamy, ſays the Hebrew language was perfect in its original; but he advances no proof of this, but ſhowing indeed by very juſt hiſtorical remarks and criticiſms, that the Hebrew was anterior in point of time to the Greek, and that in writing, the letters were taken from the Hebrew and employed in the Greek. Hiſtory ſays that Cadmus was a Phenician, and he has generally among the Greeks the honor of introducing letters. It is alſo obſerved that as the letters of the alphabet were uſed in expreſſing numbers, the Greeks after they had in proceſs of time altered or left out the letter *vau* in Hebrew, which ſtands ſixth in order, they put a new mark *s* for ſix, that the reſt might retain their powers, which plainly ſhews that the Hebrew alphabet was older than the Greek, as it now ſtands.

But for my part, I do not underſtand the meaning of ſaying that the Hebrew language was perfect at firſt; it might be fitted for all the purpoſes of them that uſed it firſt, and is probably at this day as good as any other language, ſo far as it goes, but it is plain that this and all the other languages of the firſt ages were narrow, ſhort and ſimple. They muſt have been ſo from the nature of the thing, moſt probably they conſiſted chiefly of monoſyllables repreſenting ſimple ideas. What occaſion had they for complex or compound words, when they had few if any complex or compounded ideas? This appears very plainly from the ſtate of the Hebrew language, ſome of the other orientals, and the language of all uncultivated people. It holds likewiſe in the caſe of the Chineſe language, which though the people are not uncultivated properly ſpeaking, is yet in an unimproved ſtate, from their having had little intercourſe with other nations. All ſuch languages have few adjectives, and

when they do uſe words as adjectives, they are commonly figurative. There is an ingenious and probable deduction how a ſcanty narrow language might be firſt uſed in Shuckford's connexions. They might expreſs qualities by the name of ſome animal remarkable for them—as a lion-man, for a valiant or fierce man. This is wholly agreeable to the genius of the Hebrew language. The Hebrews deſcribe every thing that is very great, by adding the name of God to it, as the trees of God—the river of God. It follows that in all uncultivated languages the figures are frequent and very ſtrong. The Indians in America have a language full of metaphors. They take up the hatchet, for going to war, and they brighten the chain, when they confirm a peace.

Hence it appears that in the earlieſt times, if they uſed figures, it was the effect of neceſſity rather than choice. But what men did at firſt out of neceſſity, orators afterwards returned to from choice, in order to increaſe the beauty or force of their diction, or both. In fact figures do make the greateſt impreſſion on men's minds. They are ſenſible, and therefore level to every perſon's capacity: for the ſame reaſon they make a ſtrong impreſſion on the imagination. They likewiſe leave a great deal of room for the creative power of fancy to make additions. A ſign or ſymbol ſeen by a multitude, on a ſubject that is underſtood, carries the contagion of enthuſiaſm or rage exceedingly far. In the 19th of Judges you ſee the Levite took his concubine, and cut her into twelve parts, and ſent them to all the tribes of Iſrael. The Roman alſo holding up the ſtump of his hand which he had loſt in the ſervice of the public, pleaded for his brother with a power vaſtly ſuperior to any language whatever.

LECTURE V.

HAVING given you a ſhort view of language in general, if it were not too long, I would conſider the ſtructure of particular languages; inſtead of which, take the few following ſhort remarks.

1. The nature of things neceſſarily ſuggeſts many of the ways of ſpeaking which conſtitute the grammar of a language, and in every language there is nearly the ſame number of parts of ſpeech, as they are enumerated in the Latin grammar; noun, pronoun, verb, participle, adverb, prepoſition, interjection, conjunction.

2. In the uſe of theſe, there is a very great variety. Nouns to be ſure, are declined nearly the ſame way in all by caſes and numbers, though the Greeks in this differ a little, uſing three numbers inſtead of two, having a particular inflection of the word, when there are but two perſons meant; and another for the plural or more: but in the verbs, there is a very great diverſity; in the active and paſſive ſignification they generally agree, but ſome expreſs the perſons by terminations, and ſome by pronouns and nominatives expreſſed. Some have moods which others have not. The Greeks have an optative mood; the Latins have gerunds; the Hebrews with fewer differences of moods, have conjugations that carry ſome variety of ſignification to the ſame word. In one word *maser*, he delivered, there is not only this and its paſſive, but another, he delivered diligently, and the paſſive; another, he made to deliver; another, he delivered himſelf. The Greeks, beſides the active and paſſive, have a *media vox*, of which perhaps the uſe is not now fully underſtood; ſince ſome of the beſt grammarians ſay it ſignifies doing a thing to one's ſelf; *Tupsomai* I ſhall ſtrike myſelf. Moſt of the modern languages decline their verbs, not by inflection of the termination, as the Greek and Latin, but by auxiliary verbs, as the Engliſh and French. The Chineſe language is perhaps the leaſt improved of any language

that has ſubſiſted for any time; this probably is owing to their want of alphabetical writing: every word among them had a character peculiar to it, ſo that letters and words were the ſame in number in their language; this rendered it of immenſe difficulty to underſtand their writing among themſelves, and quite impoſſible to foreigners: but they were vaſtly ſurpriſed to find, that the Jeſuits from Europe, that came among them, could eaſily write their language by our alphabet: and as they uſe the ſame word in different tones, for different meanings, theſe fathers alſo ſoon found a way of diſtinguiſhing theſe in writing by certain marks and accents placed over the word, differing as it was to be differently taken.

3. Some have amuſed themſelves, with inventing a language, with ſuch a regular grammar as might be eaſily underſtood, and having this language brought into general uſe. We have a remark of this kind, in Father Lami's rhetorique, in French, and he ſays the grammar of the Tartar language come neareſt to it. We have alſo had ſome ſchemes and propoſitions of this kind in Engliſh, but it ſeems wholly chimerical. I ſhall only obſerve further, that ſome few have imagined that the Hebrew language itſelf was originally, and when compleat, a perfect language, and that we now have it only maimed, and but a ſmall part of it. Theſe ſuppoſe the language to be generated thus, by taking the letters of the alphabet, and firſt going through them regularly by two, and then by three, *ab*, *ag*, *ad*, &c. *aba*, *abb*, &c. All theſe ſchemes are idle, becauſe no perſon can poſſibly lay down rules beforehand, for every thing that may hereafter be thought and ſpoken, and therefore, when they are brought out, they will be expreſſed as thoſe to whom they firſt occur ſhall incline, and cuſtom will finally fix them, and give them their authority.

Leaving theſe things therefore, as matters of more curioſity than uſe, I proceed to ſpeak of eloquent ſpeech, and its hiſtory as an art. It is plain, that in the progreſs of ſociety and the commerce of human life, it would ſoon appear that ſome ſpoke with more grace and beauty, and ſo as more to incline the hearers to their ſentiments, than others; neither is it hard to perceive that it would be early

in repute. In the firſt aſſociations of mankind, they muſt have been chiefly governed by thoſe who had the power of perſuaſion. In uncultivated ſocieties, it is ſo ſtill: In an Indian tribe, the ſachem or wiſe man directs their councils. The progreſs of oratory towards perfection, muſt have been evidently in fact, like the progreſs of all other human arts, gradual, and in proportion to the encouragement given to its exerciſe. It prevailed, where the ſtate of things and conſtitution of government favored it, but not otherwiſe.

It is to be obſerved here, that by the conſent of all, and by the memorials of antiquity that are left, poetry was more ancient than oratory; or perhaps we may rather ſay, that the firſt exertions of genius in eloquent expreſſion were in poetry, not in proſe. It has frequently been made matter of critical inquiry, why poetry was prior to oratory, and why ſooner brought to perfection? I do not perceive very clearly, what great advantage there is in determining this queſtion, ſuppoſing we ſhould hit upon the true reaſons: one reaſon I take to be, that the circumſtance in poetry that gives generally the higheſt pleaſure, viz. a ſtrong and vigorous fancy, is leaſt indebted to application, inſtruction or time for its perfection: therefore poetical productions in general, and that ſpecies of them in particular which have moſt of that quality, muſt be as eaſily produced in uncultivated times, as any other; and for ſome reaſons given in a former diſcourſe, muſt appear then with the greateſt effect. Whereas, to ſucceſs in oratory, ſome knowledge of the human heart, and even ſome experience in the ways of men, is neceſſary. Another difference is plain; poetical productions having generally pleaſure or immediate entertainment as their deſign, may produce that effect in any age; whereas the circumſtances that rendered the orator's diſcourſe intereſting, are all gone.

Perhaps to this we may add, that the incitements to poetry are more general. A poet pleaſes and obtains fame from every ſingle perſon who reads or hears his productions; but an aſſembly, buſineſs, and an occaſion are neceſſary to the orator. This laſt is likewiſe limited in point

of place and ſituation. Oratory could not thrive in a ſtate where arbitrary power prevails, becauſe then there is nothing left for large aſſemblies and a diffuſive public to determine; whereas poetry is pleaſing to perſons under any form of government whatever.

Thoſe who have given the hiſtory of oratory have rather given us the hiſtory of the teachers of that art than its progreſs and effects. It muſt be obſerved, however, that in this as well as in poetry, criticiſm is the child and not the father of genius. It is the fruit of experience and judgment, by reflection upon the ſpontaneous productions of genius. Criticiſm inquires what was the cauſe of things being agreeable, after the effect has been ſeen. Ward brings a citation from Cicero, to ſhow that the orator's art was older than the Trojan war. The purport of this is, that Homer attributes force to Ulyſſes' ſpeeches, and ſweetneſs to Neſtor's; perhaps alſo he has characteriſed Menelaus' manner as ſimple, ſhort and unadorned. There is not, however, any certainty in this art being much ſtudied or explained in theſe early times from this citation; for though Homer is an excellent poet, of inimitable fire and great ſtrength of natural judgment, it is not certain that he kept ſo perfectly to propriety, as to deſcribe only the manner and ſtyle of things at the time of the Trojan war, which was 250 years before his own. I ſhould be more apt to conclude that he had deſcribed manners, characters and ſpeakers as they were in his own time, with a little air of antiquity.

We are, however, told by Pauſanias, that the firſt ſchool of oratory in Greece was opened in the ſchool of Theſeus, the age preceding that war. If there be any certainty in this, its being taught in Greece has been very ancient indeed; but theſe being fabulous times, it is ſcarcely to be depended upon. However, it is certain that oratory flouriſhed early, and was improved greatly in Greece. Many circumſtances concurred to produce this effect. The ſpirit and capacity of the people—the early introduction of letters—but chiefly their political ſituation—the freedom of their ſtates—the frequency of public aſſemblies—and the importance of their deciſions.

There is much ſaid of the ſpirit and capacity of the Greeks for all the arts, and to be ſure their climate, ſo ſerene and temperate, might have all the effect that a climate can have: but I reckon the two other cauſes much more conſiderable. The introduction of letters is neceſſary to the improvement and perfection of a language, and as they were early bleſſed with that advantage, they had the beſt opportunity of improving. However, the laſt cauſe of all is much more powerful than both the former, though perhaps literature is neceſſary to be joined with it to produce any great effect. As to ſome of the other arts, particularly painting and ſtatuary, an eminent modern critic ſays, the Greeks could not but excel, becauſe they, of all others, had the beſt images from nature to copy. He ſays that the games in Greece, in which the beſt formed bodies for agility and ſtrength in the whole country were ſeen naked, and ſtriving and exerting themſelves to the very utmoſt, muſt have preſented to perſons of genius originals to draw from, ſuch as in moſt other nations never are to be ſeen. If this remark is juſt in the other arts, the influence of eloquence in the public aſſemblies of theſe free ſtates muſt have had a ſimilar effect in the art of ſpeaking.

The art of ſpeaking in Greece, however, does not ſeem to have riſen high till the time of Pericles, and he is ſaid to have been ſo powerful an orator that he kept up his influence in the city as much by his eloquence as tyrants did by their power. There is a paſſage of Cicero, which ſeems to ſay that he was the firſt who prepared his diſcourſes in writing, and ſome have been ſimple enough to believe that he read them; but nothing can be a more manifeſt miſtake, becauſe action or pronunciation was by all the ancients conſidered as the great point in oratory. There were to be ſeen in Cicero and Quintilian's times, orations ſaid to be of Pericles; but both theſe great orators ſeem to be of opinion that they were not his, becauſe they did not at all ſeem to come up to the great fame of his eloquence. Mr. Bayle, a very eminent critic, ſays juſtly, that theſe great men might be miſtaken in that particular; for a very indifferent compoſition may

be the work of a very great orator. The grace of elocution and the power of action might not only acquire a man fame in ſpeaking, but keep up his influence in public aſſemblies. Of this we have two very great Britiſh examples, Mr. Whitefield in the pulpit, and Mr. Pitt in the ſenate.

After Pericles there were many great orators in Greece, and indeed all their ſtateſmen were orators till the time of Demoſthenes, when the Grecian eloquence ſeems to have attained its perfection. The praiſes of this great ſpeaker are to be ſo generally met with, that I ſhall not inſiſt upon them at all, further than reminding you, that though no doubt eminently qualified by nature, he needed and received great improvement from art.

The Roman eloquence was of much ſhorter duration. It is true that the Roman ſtate being free, and the aſſemblies of the people having much in their power, it ſeems, according to the principles we have gone upon, that public ſpeaking muſt have been in eſteem; but there is ſomething peculiar. The Romans were for many ages a plain, rough, unpoliſhed people. Valor in war was their idol, and therefore though to be ſure from the earlieſt times the aſſemblies muſt have been managed in their deliberations by their ſpeakers, yet they were conciſe and unadorned, and probably conſiſted more of telling them their ſtory, and ſhowing their wounds which was of frequent practice among them, than any artful or paſſionate harangues. The firſt ſpeakers of any eminence we read of in the Roman hiſtory, were the Gracchi. Cicero I believe makes little mention even of them. Anthony and Craſſus were the firſt celebrated orators among the Romans, and they were but in the age immediately before Cicero himſelf, and from his time it rather fell into decay.

I have ſaid above that genius and excellence was before criticiſm. This is very plain; for though we read of ſchools and rhetoricians at different times and places, theſe are conſidered by the great maſters as perſons quite contemptible. Of this kind there is a remarkable paſſage in Cicero in his *Brutus*. At hunc (ſpeaking of Pericles) non

declamator, &c. The firſt juſt and truly eminent critic in Greece was Ariſtotle, who flouriſhed as late as the time of Demoſthenes. And Cicero himſelf was the firſt eminent critic among the Romans. Ariſtotle has laid open the principles of eloquence and perſuaſion as a logician and philoſopher, and Cicero has done it in a ſtill more maſterly manner, as a philoſopher, ſcholar, orator and ſtateſman; and I confeſs unleſs he has had many authors to conſult that we know nothing of, his judgment and penetration are quite admirable,and his books de Oratore, &c. more finiſhed in their kind, than any of his orations themſelves.

As to the effects of oratory, they have been and are ſurely very great, but as things ſeen through a miſt, or at a great diſtance, are apt to be miſtaken in their ſize, I am apt to think many ſay things incredible, and make ſuppoſitions quite contrary to nature and reaſon, and therefore to probability. Some ſpeak and write as if all the ancient orators had a genius more than human, and indeed by their whole ſtrain ſeem rather to extinguiſh than excite an ardor to excel. Some alſo ſeem to me to go upon a ſuppoſition as if all the people in the ancient republics had been ſages, as well as their ſtateſmen orators.—There is a remark to be found in many critics upon a ſtory of Theophraſtus the philoſopher, from which they infer the delicacy of the Athenians. That philoſopher it ſeems went to buy ſomething of an herb-woman, at a ſtall, and ſhe in her anſwer to him it ſeems called him ſtranger. This they ſay ſhows that ſhe knew him by his accent not to be a native of Athens, although he had lived there thirty years. But we are not even certain that her calling him ſtranger implied any more than that he was unknown to her. Beſides, though it were true, that ſhe diſcovered him not to be an Athenian born, this is no more than what happens in every populous country that there is ſomething in the accent which will determine a man to be of one country or province, rather than another, and I am ſomewhat of opinion that this would be more diſcernible in Greece than any where

elſe. The different dialects of the Greek tongue were not reckoned reproachful, as many local differences are in Britain, which therefore people will endeavor to rid themſelves of as well as they can. In ſhort I take it for granted, that an aſſembly of the vulgar in Athens was juſt like an aſſembly of common people among us, and a ſenate at Athens in underſtanding and taſte was not ſuperior to the ſenate of Great-Britain, and that ſome of them were but mere mobs; and that they were very diſorderly is plain from what we read of Plato being pulled down from the deſk, when he went up to defend Socrates.

The moſt remarkable ſtory of the effect of oratory is that told of Cicero's power over Cæſar in his oration for C. Ligarius. This is very pompouſly told by ſome critics, that Cæſar came to the judgment ſeat determined to condemn him, and even took the pen in his hand to ſign his condemnation, but that he was intereſted by Cicero's eloquence, and at laſt ſo moved that he dropped the pen and granted the orator's requeſt. But ſuppoſing the facts to have happened, I am very doubtful of the juſtneſs of the remark. Cæſar was a great politician, and as we know he did attempt to eſtabliſh his authority by mercy, it is not unlikely both that he determined to pardon Ligarius, and to flatter Cicero's vanity by giving him the honor of obtaining it. In ſhort, oratory has its chief power in promiſcuous aſſemblies, and there it reigned of old, and reigns ſtill, by its viſible effect.

LECTURE VI.

WE now proceed to conſider eloquence as divided into its three great kinds—the ſublime, the ſimple, and the mixed. This is very unhappily expreſſed by Ward, who divides ſtyle into the low, the middle, and the ſublime. Low is a word which, in its firſt and literal ſenſe, ſignifies ſituation, and when applied metaphorically, never is, in any inſtance, uſed in a good

ſenſe, but always ſignifies what is either unhappy, or baſe and contemptible, as we ſay a man's or a ſtate's finances are low. We ſay a man is in a low ſtate of health. We ſay he is guilty of low, mean practices.—Has a low, mean, paltry ſtyle. It was therefore conveying a very wrong idea to make *low* one of the different kinds of ſtyle. You may obſerve that I have introduced this diſtinction in a manner ſomewhat different from him, and ſome other authors. They conſider it as a diviſion of ſtyle. I chooſe rather to ſay there are three different great kinds, into which eloquence and compoſition may be divided. The reaſon is I believe, the word *style*, which was uſed both by the Greeks and Romans, but eſpecially the latter, has like many others gradually changed its meaning. At firſt it ſignified the manner of writing in general, and is even ſometimes uſed ſo ſtill, but more commonly now in Engliſh it is confined to the diction. Nothing is more common than to ſay ſublimity in ſentiments and ſtyle, ſo as to diſtinguiſh the one from the other. I am ſenſible that even in this confined ſenſe there is a ſublimity, ſimplicity, and mediocrity in language itſelf, which will naturally enough fall to be explained, but it is better upon the whole to conſider them as different kinds of eloquence for ſeveral reaſons.

Sublimity in writing conſiſts with all ſtyles, and particularly many of the higheſt and moſt admired examples of ſublimity are in the utmoſt ſimplicity of ſtyle. Sometimes they are ſo far from loſing by it, that they owe a great part of their beauty and their force to it. That remarkable example of ſublimity in the Scripture, is wholly in the ſimple ſtyle. "Let there be light, and there "was light. There are alſo many others in Scripture, "The gods of the Gentiles are vanity and lies,"—"I am "that I am."

Some of the other kinds alſo, even the ſimpleſt, do ſometimes admit great force of expreſſion, though more rarely, and there is a great danger in the ſimple manner of writing, by admitting lofty expreſſions to ſwell into bombaſt. The mixed kind frequently admits of ſublimity of ſtyle, and indeed is called mixed, as conſiſting, as it were,

alternately of the one and the other, or being made up of a proportion of each.

The ſublime kind of writing chiefly belongs to the following ſubjects: epic poetry, tragedy, orations on great ſubjects, and then particularly the peroration. Nothing can be too great for theſe ſubjects, and unleſs they are treated with ſublimity, they are not treated ſuitably. The ſimple kind of writing belongs to ſcientific writing, epiſtolary writing, eſſay and dialogue, and to the whole inferior ſpecies of poetry, paſtorals, epigrams, epitaphs, &c. The mixed kind belongs to hiſtory, ſyſtem, and controverſy. The firſt ſort muſt be always ſublime in ſentiment or language, or both. The ſecond may be often ſublime in ſentiment: ſometimes, but very rarely, in language. The mixed admits of both ſorts with full propriety, and may be often ſublime both in ſentiment and language.

Let us now conſider theſe three great kinds of compoſition, ſeparately, in the order in which I have named them.

1. Of the ſublime manner of writing—This is very difficult to deſcribe or treat of, in a critical manner. It is very remarkable, that all writers on this ſubject, not excepting thoſe of the greateſt judgment, accuracy and preciſion, when they come to explain it, have uſed nothing but metaphorical expreſſions. It is however certain in general, that metaphor ſhould be kept as much as poſſible out of definition or explication. Theſe all agreeing therefore in this circumſtance, ſeems to ſhow that ſublimity is a ſingle or ſimple idea, that cannot be reſolved, divided or analyſed, and that a taſte for it, is in a good meaſure, a feeling of nature. The critics tell us, that ſublimity is that which ſurpriſes, raviſhes, tranſports: theſe are words frequently applied to its effects upon the hearers, and greatneſs, loftineſs, majeſty, are aſcribed to the ſentiments, to the character, to the perſon. An oration, or the ſublime parts of a poem, have been compared to the voice of thunder, or penetration of lightning, to the impetuoſity of a torrent; this laſt, is one of the beſt metaphorical expreſſions for ſublimity in eloquence, becauſe it carries

in it, not only the idea of great force, but of carrying away every thing with it that oppoſes or lies in its way. That may be ſaid to be ſublime, that has an irreſiſtible influence on the hearers, and when examined, carries in it the idea of great power and abilities in the ſpeaker: yet even this is not ſufficient, it has the character of greatneſs, as diſtinct from that of beauty, ſweetneſs or uſe. Burke, on the ſublime, has endeavored to ſhow that ſublimity and beauty, though generally united in our apprehenſions, are diſtinct qualities, and to be traced to a different ſource. Of ſublimity in particular, he ſays it is always allied to ſuch things as raiſe the paſſion of terror: but of this I will ſpeak more fully upon a head I have reſerved for that purpoſe; in which I propoſe to inquire into the firſt principles of taſte or approbation, common to this and all other arts.

Longinus mentions no leſs than five different ſources of the ſublime. (1) Greatneſs or elevation of mind. (2) Pathos or paſſion. (3) Figure. (4) Nobleneſs of language. (5) Compoſition or arrangement of words. But though the laſt two of theſe are of conſiderable moment, and greatly contribute to augment the force as well as beauty of a diſcourſe, I do not think they are of that nature, as to be conſidered upon the ſame footing with the other three. Therefore leaving what is to be ſaid upon them to the next head, when it will properly occur, I ſhall conſider the others in their order.

1. Greatneſs or elevation of mind—This is the firſt and radical ſource of ſublimity indeed. It is quite impoſſible for a man to attain to ſublimity of compoſition, unleſs his ſoul is great, and his conceptions noble: and on the other hand, he that poſſeſſes theſe, can hardly expreſs himſelf meanly. Longinus gives it as an advice, that a man ſhould accuſtom his mind to great thought. But if you aſk me what are great thoughts, I confeſs myſelf unable to explain it, and unleſs the feeling is natural, I am afraid it is impoſſible to impart it; yet it ſeems to be pretty generally underſtood. It is common to ſay ſuch a man has a great ſoul, or ſuch another has a mean or little ſoul. A great ſoul aſpires in its hopes; is not eaſily ter-

rified by enemies or diſcouraged by difficulties, It is worth while to conſider a little the effect of a man's outward circumſtances. The mind to be ſure, cannot be wholly made by any circumſtances. Sentiments and ſtate are different things. Many a great mind has been in narrow circumſtances, and many a little raſcal has been a king; yet education and manner have a ſenſible effect upon men in general. I imagine I have obſerved, that when perſons of great rank, have been at the ſame time, men of real genius, they have generally excelled in majeſty and dignity of ſentiments and language. This was an advantage generally enjoyed by the ancients whoſe writings remain to us; having but their own language to ſtudy, and being early introduced into public life, and even into the conduct of the greateſt affairs, they were led into nobleneſs of ſentiment. Xenophon, Domoſthenes, Cicero, Cæſar, were all of them great ſtateſmen, and two of them great generals, as well as writers. In modern times, there is a more compleat partition of employments, ſo that the ſtateſman, general and ſcholar, are ſeldom found united in the ſame perſon; yet I think it appears in fact, that when ſtateſmen are alſo ſcholars, they make upon the whole, greater orators and nobler writers, than thoſe who are ſcholars merely, though of the greateſt capacity. In every ſtation however, this remark has place, that it is of importance to ſublimity in writing, to endeavor to acquire a large and liberal manner of thinking. Whilſt I am making uſe of this language, I would caution you againſt thinking that pride and vanity of mind, are at all allied to greatneſs, in this reſpect. There is a ſet of men called free-thinkers, who are pleaſed to arrogate to themſelves, a large and liberal manner of thinking, and the generality of them, are as little creatures, as any on the face of the earth. Mr. Addiſon compares them to a fly, which lighting upon a great building, and perceiving the ſmall interſtices between the ſtones, cries out of vaſt chaſms and irregularities, which is wholly owing to the extreme littleneſs of his ſight, that is not able to ſee the dignity and grandeur of the whole building.

When I am upon this ſubject of greatneſs and elevation of thought, as one ſource of the ſublime, you will naturally expect that I ſhould give ſome examples to illuſtrate it. I ſhall begin with ſome out of the ſcriptures, where indeed there is the greateſt number, and theſe the nobleſt that can well be conceived. "I am God alone, and beſides me there is no ſaviour—Who is this that darkeneth counſel by words without knowledge?—Who will ſet the briars and thorns againſt me in battle?" &c. See alſo two paſſages inimitably grand—Iſa. 40. 12—and v. 21, and onwards.

To mention ſome of the ſayings in heathen antiquity—Alexander's ſaying to Parmenio is certainly of the great kind, yet perhaps with a conſiderable mixture of pride as well as greatneſs. Parmenio told him, if he were Alexander he would act in a certain manner. Anſwer. So would I, if I were Parmenio. That of Porus, the Indian king, to Alexander however, was much greater. When he was Alexander's priſoner, and was aſked by that prince how he expected to be treated? He anſwered, like a king. Cæſar's famous ſaying of veni, vidi, vici, has often been quoted as a conciſe and noble deſcription of the rapidity of his conqueſts; yet I confeſs I think it very dubious; it has not only an air of improper vanity, but looks like an intended and ſilly play upon the words, and what we call ailiteration. They are three words of the ſame length, the ſame tenſe, and the ſame beginning and ending. Cicero, in one of his orations, I believe in that for Marcellus, has a very noble compliment to Cæſar, when he ſays the gods had given nothing to men ſo great as a diſpoſition to ſhew mercy. But of all great ſayings on record, there is none that ever made ſuch an impreſſion upon me as that of Ayliffe to king James the IIId. He had been detected in ſome of the plots, &c. The king ſaid to him, Mr. Ayliffe, don't you know 'tis in my power to pardon you? Yes (ſays he) I know it is in your power, but it is not in your nature!

It is neceſſary to put you in mind in reading books of criticiſm, that when examples of greatneſs of ſentiment are produced from Homer and the other ancient writers,

that all circumſtances muſt be taken in, in order to form a juſt opinion concerning them. We muſt remember his times, and the general belief of his countrymen with regard to theology, and many other ſubjects. There muſt be a probability to make a thing natural, otherwiſe it is not great or noble, but extravagant. Homer in deſcribing the goddeſs Diſcord, ſays, her feet were upon the earth, and her head was covered with the clouds. He makes Pluto look up and affirm, that Neptune would open hell itſelf, and make the light to ſhine into that dark abode. There are ſome of theſe that appear to me ſuſpicious even in Homer himſelf; ſuch as when he makes Jupiter brag that if all the other gods were to hang at the bottom of a chain, and earth and ſea, and all along with them, he would toſs them all up as eaſily as a ball. However it was with regard to him, who was taught to believe in Jupiter ſitting upon Mount Olympus, or quaffing Nectar in the council of the gods, modern and Chriſtian writers and ſpeakers ſhould be careful to avoid any thing that is extravagant and ridiculous, or even ſuch alluſions to the heathen theology as could only be proper to thoſe who believed in it.

There is the more reaſon to inſiſt upon this, that as grandeur and ſublimity is commonly a great object of ambition, particularly with young perſons, they are very ready to degenerate into bombaſt. You ought always to remember that the language ought to be no higher than the ſubject, or the part of the ſubject that is then immediately handled. See an example of the different ways of a ſimple and a turgid writer, upon the very ſame ſentiment, where the Roman empire was extended to the weſtern coaſt of Spain, Sextus Rufus ſimply tells it thus—Hiſpanias per Decimum Brutum obtinuimus et uſque ad Gades et oceanum pervenimus. Florus, taking a more lofty flight, ſays—Decimus Brutus aliquanto totius, &c.

I have only further to obſerve, that in ſublime deſcriptions great care ſhould be taken, that they be all of a piece, and nothing unſuitable brought into view. Longinus juſtly blamed the poet Heſiod, that after he had ſaid every

thing he could, to render the goddeſs of darkneſs terrible, he adds, that a ſtinking humor ran from her noſe—a circumſtance highly diſguſting, but no way terrible.

LECTURE VII.

I COME now to the ſecond ſource of the ſublime, which is pathos, more commonly called in Engliſh the pathetic, that is, the power of moving the paſſions. This is a very important part of the ſubject: a power over the paſſions is of the utmoſt conſequence to a poet, and it is all in all to an orator. This every one will perceive if he only recollects what influence paſſion or ſentiment has upon reaſon, or, in other words, inclination upon the practical judgment. He that poſſeſſes this power in a high degree has the higheſt capacity of uſefulneſs, and is likewiſe able to do the greateſt miſchief. Sublime ſentiments and language may be formed upon any ſubject, and they touch the heart with a ſenſe of ſympathy or approbation; but to move the paſſions of others ſo as to incline their choice, or to alter their purpoſe, is particularly the deſign of eloquence.

The chief paſſions eloquence is intended to work upon are, rage, terror, pity, and perhaps deſire in general, though occaſionally he may have occaſion to introduce every affection. In a heroic poem every affection may be ſaid to take its turn; but the different ſpecies of oratory, or the different objects and ſubjects of it, may be ſaid to divide the paſſions. A ſpeaker in political or deliberative aſſemblies may be ſaid to have it in view to excite the paſſion of rage: he may naturally deſire to incenſe his hearers againſt their enemies, foreign and domeſtic, repreſenting the firſt as terrible and dangerous, to excite averſion and hatred, and the other as weak or worthleſs, to excite contempt. An example of this you have in the great ſubject of Demoſthenes's orations, Philip, king of Macedon—another in Cicero's diſcourſes againſt Cataline and Anthony. Pity is the chief paſſion attempted to be raiſed at

the bar, unleſs in criminal caſes, where indignation againſt villainy of every kind is the part of the accuſer. Terror and its attendants belong very much to a ſpeaker in the pulpit; rage he has nothing to do with but in an improper ſenſe, to raiſe a ſtrong and ſteady, but uniform indignation, againſt evil. But even this a ſpeaker from the pulpit ſhould endeavor to convert into compaſſion for the folly and wretchedneſs of the guilty perſon. Pity ſeems to be the ſingle object in tragedy.

One talent of great moment towards raiſing the paſſions is a ſtrong and clear imagination, and a deſcriptive manner of ſpeaking, to paint ſcenes and objects ſtrongly, and ſet them before the eyes of the hearers. To ſelect ſuch circumſtances as will have the moſt powerful effect, and to dwell only upon theſe. We have not any where in Engliſh a finer example of the pathetic, and the choice and uſe of circumſtances, than the ſpeech which Shakeſpeare has made for Anthony in the tragedy of Cæſar. It appears from the hiſtory, that Anthony did ſucceſsfully raiſe the fury of the Romans againſt thoſe who killed Cæſar, and I think he could hardly ſelect better images and language than thoſe we have in the Engliſh poet.

But yeſterday, &c.

1. To raiſing the paſſions with ſucceſs, much penetration and knowledge of human nature is neceſſary. Without this every attempt muſt fail. In confirmation of this remark, though there are perſons much better fitted for it by nature than others, the moſt powerful in raiſing the paſſions have generally been thoſe who have had much acquaintance with mankind, and practice in life. Recluſe ſtudents and profeſſed ſcholars will be able to diſcover truth, and to defend it, or to write moral precepts with clearneſs and beauty; but they are ſeldom equal for the tender and pathetic, to thoſe who have been much in what is called the *world*—by a well known uſe of that word though almoſt peculiar to the Engliſh language. There is perhaps a double reaſon for perſons well verſed in the ways of men having the greateſt power upon the paſſions. They not only know others better, and therefore

how to touch them, but their own hearts, it is likely, have been agitated by more paſſions than thoſe whoſe lives have been more calm and even.

2. To raiſing the paſſions of others, it is neceſſary the orator or writer ſhould feel what he would communicate. This is ſo well known a rule, that I am almoſt aſhamed to mention it, or the trite quotation commonly attending it; "Si vis me flere dolendum eſt primum ipſi tibi." You may as well kindle a fire with a piece of ice, as raiſe the paſſions of others while your own are ſtill. I ſuppoſe the reaſon of this, if we would critically examine it, is, that we believe the thing to be a pretence or impoſition altogether, if we ſee that he who wiſhes us to be moved by what he ſays, is notwithſtanding himſelf unmoved. The offence is even ſomething more than barely negative in ſome caſes. If we hear a man ſpeaking with coldneſs and indifference, where we think he ought to be deeply intereſted, we feel a certain diſappointment, and are filled with diſpleaſure; as if an advocate was pleading for a perſon accuſed of a capital crime, if he ſhould appear with an air of indifference and unconcern, let his language and compoſition be what they will, it is always faulty or diſguſting: or let a miniſter when ſpeaking on the weighty ſubject of eternity, ſhow any levity in his carriage, it muſt weaken the force of the moſt moving truths; whereas, when we ſee the ſpeaker wholly engaged and poſſeſſed by his ſubject, feeling every paſſion he wiſhes to communicate, we give ourſelves up to him without reſerve, and are formed after his very temper by receiving his inſtructions.

3. It is a direction nearly allied to this, that a man ſhould never attempt to raiſe the paſſions of his hearers higher than the ſubject plainly merits it. There are ſome ſubjects, that if we are able, are of ſuch moment as to deſerve all the zeal and fire we can poſſibly beſtow on them, of which we may ſay, as Dr. Young, "Paſſion is reaſon, tranſport, "temper here." A lawyer for his client, whom he believes to be innocent; a patriot for his country, which he believes to be in danger: but above all, a miniſter for his people's everlaſting welfare, may ſpeak with as much

force and vehemence, as his temper and frame are susceptible of; but in many other cases it is easy to transcend the bounds of reason, and make the language more lofty than the theme. We meet often for example, with raised and laboured encomiums in dedications, a species of writing the most difficult to succeed in, of any almost, that can be named. The person honored by this mark of the author's esteem, is very seldom placed in the same rank by the public, that he is by him. Besides, though he were really meritorious, it seldom comes fairly up to the representation: the truth is, to correspond to the picture, he should be almost the only meritorious person of the age or place in which he lives. Now, considering how cold a compliment this is to all the rest, and particularly to those who read it, there is little wonder that such rhapsodies are treated with contempt. I have often thought the same thing of funeral panegyrics: when a man dies, whose name perhaps was hardly ever heard of before, we have a splendid character of him in the newspapers, where the prejudice of relations or the partiality of friendship do just what they please. I remember at the death of a person whom I shall not name, who was it must be confessed, not inconsiderable for literature, but otherwise had not much that was either great or amiable about him, an elegiac poem was published, which began with this line, "Whence this astonishment in every face?" Had the thing been really true, and the public had been deeply affected with the loss, the introduction had been not inelegant; but on such a pompous expression, when the reader recollected that he had seen no marks of public astonishment, it could not but tempt him to smile.

4. Another important remark to be made here, is, that a writer or speaker in attempting the pathetic, should consider his own natural turn, as well as the subject. Some are naturally of a less warm and glowing imagination, and in themselves susceptible of a less degree of passion than others; these should take care not to attempt a flight that they cannot finish, or enter upon such sentiments and language as they will probably sink as it were, and fall away from in a little time. Such should substitute gravity and

ſolemnity, inſtead of fire, and only attempt to make their diſcourſe clear to the underſtanding, and convincing to the conſcience: perhaps, this is in general the beſt way in ſerious diſcourſes and moral writings: becauſe, though it may not produce ſo ſtrong or ardent emotions, it often leaves a deeper and more laſting impreſſion.

Of Figurative Speech.

It is common to meet with this expreſſion; "The tropes and figures of rhetoric." This expreſſion is not juſt; the terms are neither ſynonymous, nor are they two diſtinct ſpecies of one genus—Figure is the general expreſſion; a trope is one of the figures, but there are many more. Every trope is a figure, but every figure is not a trope: perhaps we may ſay a trope is an expedient to render language more extenſive and copious, and may be uſed in tranquility; whereas, a figure is the effect of paſſion. This diſtinction however, cannot be univerſally maintained; for tropes are oftentimes the effect of paſſion as well as of the narrowneſs of language. Figures may be defined any departure from the plain direct manner of expreſſion, and particularly ſuch as are ſuggeſted by the paſſions, and differ on that account, from the way in which we would have ſpoken, if in a ſtate of perfect tranquility. Tropes are a ſpecies of figures, in which a word or phraſe is made uſe of in a ſenſe different from its firſt and proper ſignification, as "The Lord is a ſun and ſhield;" where the words "ſun and ſhield," are uſed tropically. There are ſeveral different tropes.

1. Metonymy—This is a very general kind of trope, comprehending under it ſeveral others; the meaning of it is a change of name, or one name for another: this may be done ſeveral ways: (1) The cauſe may be put for the effect, or the effect for the cauſe: as when we ſay, cold death; becauſe death makes cold: Old age kept him behind, that is, made him weak, &c. (2) The author for his works. (3) The thing containing, for the thing contained: as drink the cup, that is, the liquor in the cup. (4) A part is taken for the whole, or the whole for a part;

as my roof for my houſe ; my houſe is on fire, when only a ſmall part of it burns—This is called ſynecdoche. (5) A general term for a particular ; a hundred reaſons may be given, that is, many reaſons may be given. (6) A proper name for a characteriſtic name, as he is a Nero for a cruel man, or a Sardanapalus for a voluptuous monarch. All theſe and many more are metonymies.

2. Metaphor—this might as well have been the general term, as trope ; for it alſo ſignifies change of expreſſion : it is a ſpeciès of trope, by which any term is applied in a ſenſe different from its natural import, as when we ſay a tide of pleaſure, to expreſs the impetuoſity of pleaſure : when the heavens are ſaid to be over our heads as braſs, and the earth under our feet as iron.

3. Allegory—This is continuing the metaphor, and extending it by a variety of expreſſions of the ſame kind, as the Lord is my ſhepherd, he maketh me to lie down in green paſtures—he maketh me to feed beſide the ſtill waters.

4. Irony—In uſing words directly contrary to their meaning ; as, " No doubt you are the people and wiſdom " ſhall die with you."

5. Hyperbole—When things are carried beyond their truth, to expreſs our ſentiments more ſtrongly, as " Swift- " er than the wind, whiter than ſnow.

6. Catachreſis—is the firſt trope of all, when words are uſed in an oppoſite, and ſometimes in an impoſſible ſenſe, as when chains and ſhackles are called bracelets of iron.

Figures.

Figures cannot be fully enumerated, becauſe they are without number ; and each figure may be uſed ſeveral different ways. (1) Exclamation—This is nothing elſe than a way of expreſſing admiration or lamentation, as Oh ! Alas! Heavens ! &c. uſed by perſons much moved. (2) Doubt—This is frequently the expreſſion of a doubtful mind, in ſuſpenſe what to do. This is deſcribed by Virgil, in the diſtreſs of Dido, when Eneas left her ; " Shall I go to the neighboring kings whom I have ſo of-

" ten deſpiſed?" Sometimes it is a beautiful figure, and obliges perſons to take notice of it, and ſometimes of what they would otherwiſe have omitted: " Who is this that " cometh from Edom?" (3) Epanorthoſis—This is a correction or improvement of what has been ſaid: " You are " not truly the ſon of a goddeſs, nay you muſt have ſucked " a tygreſs." (4) Pleonaſm—This is a redundancy, as " I have heard it with my ears, he ſpake it with his mouth." (5) Similitude—This is comparing one thing with another, as " he ſhall be like a tree planted, &c. (6) Diſtribution—This conſiſts of a particular enumeration of ſeveral correſpondent images; " Their throat is an open " ſepulchre, their tongues have uſed deceit." (7) Proſopopeia—When, perſons dead or abſent, or different from the ſpeaker, are brought in ſpeaking, as Cicero ſuppoſes his country or Italy, and all the public ſaying to him, " Marcus Tullius what are you doing?" (8) Apoſtrophe—When perſons dead or abſent, or any inanimate things are ſpoken to, as Cicero ſays, " O! vos, or hear O! Heavens, " and give ear O earth!" (9) Communication—When a ſpeaker calls upon his hearers to ſay what advice they would give, or what they would have done different from what he or the perſon whom he defends has done; What could you have done in this caſe? What ſhould I do now? (10) Interrogation—Putting a thing home to the readers, as " What fruit had you then in thoſe things of which " you are now aſhamed?"

LECTURE VIII.

I HAVE now gone through the account given in the ſyſtems, of the tropes and figures of rhetoric, by which you will ſufficiently underſtand the meaning of both. The proper applications however of them is a matter of much greater moment, and of much greater difficulty. I will make a few remarks before I cloſe the ſubject, in addition to what hath been already interſperſed through the different parts of it.

1. Perhaps it will not be improper to conſider what is the purpoſe intended by figures. I have introduced them here as a means of giving ſublimity to a diſcourſe, but may there not be ſome little analyſis and reſolution of that purpoſe, may we not inquire what are the particular effects of figures? Are the effects of figures in general, and of all figures, the ſame? It is certain that figurative ſpeech is very powerful in raiſing the paſſions. And probably different figures are proper to expreſs or excite different paſſions; admiration, deſire, pity, hatred, rage, or diſdain. This appears from the explication of figures formerly given. But beſides this, we may obſerve that there are ſome effects of figures that ſeem to be wholly unconnected with paſſion, of theſe I ſhall mention three; ornament, explication, conviction. Sometimes figure is made uſe of merely for ornament. Of this Rollin gives us an example in which an author ſays, "The king, to "give an eternal mark of the eſteem and friendſhip with "which he honored a great general, gave an illuſtrious "place to his glorious aſhes amidſt thoſe maſters of the "earth, who preſerve on the magnificence of their tombs "an image of the luſtre of their thrones." Under this head may be reckoned all the examples of the uſe of figures, to raiſe things that are mean and low in themſelves to ſome degree of dignity by the phraſeology, or to give a greater dignity to any thing than the ſimple idea or the proper name would convey, as if one ſhould ſay, looking round the ſcene and obſerving the bounteous gifts of Providence for the ſupport of innumerable creatures, inſtead of the graſs and corn every where growing in abundance. Perhaps alſo under the ſame head may be reckoned, the clothing in other terms any thing that might be ſuppoſed diſagreeable or diſguſting, as when Cicero confeſſes that the ſervants of Milo killed Clodius, he does not ſay interfecerunt but he ſays, "They did that which every "good man would wiſh his ſervants to do in like circum-"ſtances." I ſhall only obſerve, that the greateſt delicacy and judgment imaginable is neceſſary in the uſe of figures with this view, becauſe they are very apt to degenerate into bombaſt. Young perſons in their firſt com-

poſitions, and eſpecially when they have a good deal of ancient literature freſh in their heads, are very apt to be faulty in this particular. A common word or ſentiment which any body might uſe, and every body would underſtand, they think mean and below them, and therefore they have recourſe to unneceſſary figures, and hard or learned phraſes. Inſtead of walking about the fields they perambulate them, they do not diſcover a thing, but recogniſe it. Johnſon the author of the Rambler is the moſt faulty this way, of any writer of character. A little play of wit, or a few ſtrokes of raillery, he calls *a reciprocation of ſmartness.*

Another uſe of figures is for explication, to make a thing more clearly conceived. This in general may be ſaid to be the uſe of the ſimilitude, only I think when figures are uſed for illuſtration, it is as much to aſſiſt the imagination as the judgment, and to make the impreſſion which was before real and juſt, very ſtrong. For example when Solomon ſays, "Let a bear robbed of her "whelps meet a man, rather than a fool in his folly," "If you bray a fool in a mortar, he will return to his "folly." "The fooliſh man walketh by the way, and "he ſaith to every one that he is a fool."

A third uſe of figures may be ſaid, although improperly, to be for conviction, or to make us more readily or more fully yield to the truth, as when to ſupport what we have ſaid, that perſons of ſound judgment are reſerved in ſpeech, we add, deep waters move without noiſe—or that men in eminent ſtations are expoſed to obſervation and cenſure. "A city that is ſet on a hill cannot be hid." In all ſuch caſes therefore it is certain that a ſimilitude is not an argument, yet the analogy of nature ſeems to carry in it a good deal of evidence, and adds to the impreſſion made upon the mind.

2. A ſecond remark is, that figures of every kind ſhould come naturally, and never be ſought for. The deſign of explaining the ſeveral kinds of figures is not to teach you to make them, but to correct them. Arguments and illuſtrations we muſt endeavor to invent, but

figures never. If they do not flow ſpontaneous, they are always forced. If a man having proceeded too far in a ſubject, bethinks himſelf, that he will here introduce a ſimilitude, or an allegory, or a proſopopeia, &c. he will either miſs of it altogether, or he will produce ſomething vaſtly more jejune and inſipid, than it is poſſible for any man to make without figures. It puts me in mind of the ridiculous chaſms that ſome perſons bring themſelves to in converſation, when they offer to bring a ſimilitude which has not yet occurred to them. They will ſay "He "raged, and raved, and roared juſt like—I don't know "what." Figures ſhould be the native expreſſion of paſſions or conceptions already felt, as they are the means of raiſing paſſions in thoſe to whom you ſpeak. They ſhould therefore be poſterior in point of time, to the feelings of the ſpeaker, although prior to thoſe of the hearers. The great purpoſe therefore of criticiſm on this part of the ſubject, is to prune the luxuriancies of nature, and ſee that the figures be juſt and natural.

3. I have already in ſpeaking upon the tropes, had occaſion to give ſome rules as to the uſe of them, particularly as to the propriety and conſiſtency of them. But there are ſome things to be obſerved further for explaining them. There are two characters frequently given to tropes, eſpecially to metaphors, which deſerve to be conſidered. The one is ſtrength, the other is boldneſs. Theſe are by no means the ſame. That is a ſtrong metaphor or image, that gives us a very lively impreſſion of the thing repreſented. As that of the wiſe man, "A "ſtone is heavy, and the ſand is weighty, but a fool's "wrath is heavier than them both." A bold image or metaphor is that which upon the whole is juſt and ſtrong, but is conſiderably removed from common obſervation, and would not eaſily or readily have occurred to another. It is alſo called a bold image when the reſemblance is but in one ſingle point. There is not any where to be ſeen a collection of bolder images, than in the book of Job, particularly in the deſcription of the war-horſe, among which in particular the following ſeems to excel, "Haſt "thou clothed his neck with thunder." To liken the

mane of a horſe to thunder, would not have occurred to every one; neither in idea does the reſemblance hold but in one particular, that the flowing and waving of the mane is like the ſheets and forked flakes of lightning.

LECTURE IX.

I NOW come to conſider the ſimple manner of writing. If I could explain this fully, ſo as to make every one clearly to underſtand it, and at the ſame time incline you to admire and ſtudy it, I ſhould think a very difficult and important point was gained. It is exceedingly difficult to bring young perſons eſpecially, to a taſte for the ſimple way of writing. They are apt to think it of little moment, not ſo much the object of ambition as an exerciſe of ſelf-denial, to ſay a thing plainly, when they might have ſaid it nobly. I would obſerve therefore, in the very beginning, that it is a miſtake to conſider ſimplicity and ſublimity as univerſally oppoſite, for on the contrary there is not only a great excellence in ſome performances, which we may call wholly of the ſimple kind; ſuch as a ſtory told, or an epiſtle written, with all the beauty of ſimplicity, but in the moſt ſublime and animated compoſitions, ſome of the greateſt ſentiments derive their beauty from being clothed in ſimple language. Simplicity is even as neceſſary to ſome parts of an oration, as it is to the whole of ſome kinds of compoſition. Let the ſubject be ever ſo great and intereſting, it is prudent, decent, neceſſary, to begin the diſcourſe in a cool and diſpaſſionate manner. That man who ſhould begin an oration with the ſame boldneſs of figure and the ſame high pitch of voice that would be proper towards the cloſe of it, would commit one of the greateſt faults againſt propriety, and I think would wholly prevent its effect upon the hearers.

But how ſhall we explain the ſimple manner of writing? It is, ſay many authors, that which is likeſt to and

leaſt removed from the language of common life. It muſt be therefore eaſy and obvious, few or no figures in the expreſſion, nothing obſcure in the ſentiments, or involved in the method. Long ſentences are contrary to it, words either difficult or uncommon are inconſiſtent with it. Cicero and Horace have both ſaid, and all critics have ſaid after them, it is that which when men hear, they think that they themſelves could only have ſaid the ſame, or that it is juſt a kind of expreſſion of their own thoughts. They generally remark further, that it is what ſeems to be eaſy, but yet is not; as Horace ſays, ut ſibi quivis ſperet idem, &c. We may further obſerve, that what is truly ſimple always carries in it the idea of being eaſy in its production, as well as in imitation, and indeed the one of theſe ſeems neceſſarily to ſuppoſe the other. Whatever ſeems to be the effect of ſtudy and much invention, cannot be ſimple. It is finely exemplified in the introduction of Anthony's ſpeech in Shakeſpeare: I am no orator as Brutus is, &c. Rollin has given us an admirable example of a ſtory told with a beautiful ſimplicity, from Cicero's offices. There is an example alſo in Livy's account of the battle of the Horatii and Curiatii, only with a little more force of expreſſion, as the importance and ſolemnity of the ſubject ſeemed to require it. But it requires a very maſterly knowledge of the Latin language, to perceive the beauties fully, that are pointed at by Rollin in the firſt inſtance, or might eaſily be mentioned in the laſt. There is no author in our language who excels more in ſimplicity than Addiſon—The Spectator in general indeed, but eſpecially the papers written by him, excel in this quality. Eaſe and elegance are happily joined in them, and nature itſelf, as it were, ſeems to ſpeak in them. If ſome of the later periodical writers have equalled, or even excelled them in force or elegance, not one has ever come up to them in ſimplicity.

The ſubjects or the ſpecies of writing in which ſimplicity chiefly ſhines, are narration, dialogue, epiſtolary writing, eſſay writing, and all the lighter ſpecies of poetry, as odes, ſongs, epigrams, eligies and ſuch like. The ancients were remarkable for a love and admiration of ſim-

plicity, and ſome of them remain to us as eminent examples of its excellence. Xenophon in his inſtitution of Cyrus, is particularly remarkable for a ſweet and dignified ſimplicity. He uſes neither language nor ideas that are difficult and far-fetched. In the ſmaller compoſitions of the ancients, as odes, epigrams, &c. they were at prodigious pains to poliſh them, and make them quite eaſy and natural. They placed their great glory in beſtowing much art, and at the ſame time making it to appear quite eaſy and artleſs, according to the ſaying now grown into a proverb, *artis est celare artem.* The beauty of ſimplicity may not appear at firſt ſight, or be at all perceived by perſons of a vitiated taſte, but all perſons of good judgment immediately, and the bulk of mankind in time, are charmed with what is quite eaſy, and yet truly accurate and elegant.

It ought to be carefully obſerved that ſimplicity is quite a different thing from lowneſs and meanneſs, and the great art of a writer is to preſerve the one without degenerating into the other. It is the eaſieſt thing in the world to ſpeak or write vulgariſms, but a perſon of true taſte will carefully avoid every thing of that kind. For example, one who would write ſimply, and as near the language of plain people in ordinary diſcourſe as poſſible, would yet avoid every abſurdity or barbariſm that obtains a place in common converſation, as to ſay, "This here "table, and that there candle." It is alſo quite contrary to ſimplicity to adopt the quaint expreſſions or cant phraſes that are the children of faſhion, and obtain for a little, or in ſome particular places and not in others. The Spectator attacked with great ſpirit and propriety ſeveral of thoſe that were introduced into converſation and writing in his time, ſuch as *mob*, *rep*, *pos*, *bite*, *bamboosle*, and ſeveral others. Moſt of them he fairly defeated, but one or two of them got the better of him, and are now freely introduced into the language, ſuch as *mob*. Johnſon alſo has put bamboozle in his Dictionary, which he calls indeed a low word. Arbuthnot is his authority, but it was plainly uſed by him in the way of ridicule, and therefore it ſhould either not have been in the Dictionary,

at all, or such an authority should not have been given for it.

It is exceedingly difficult, and requires an excellent judgment to be able to descend to great simplicity, and yet to keep out every low expression or idea. I do not think it is easy to be a thorough judge of pure diction in any language but our own, and not even in that without a good deal of the knowledge of human life, and a thorough acquaintance with the best authors. Writers and speakers of little judgment are apt at times to go into extremes, to swell too much on the one hand, and to fall into what is vulgar and offensive on the other.

When speaking on simplicity, I observe that there is a simplicity in the taste and composition of a whole discourse, different from simplicity of sentiment and language in the particular parts. This will incline a man to avoid all unnecessary ornament, particularly the ornaments of fashion, and the peculiar dress or mode of the times. We say in architecture that a building is in a simple style, when it has not a great multiplicity of ornaments, or is not loaded with beauties, so to speak. It is very remarkable that books written in the same age will differ very much one from another in this respect; and those which have least of the ornaments then in vogue, continue in reputation when the others are grown ridiculous. I will give you an instance of this. A small religious treatise, Scougal's Life of God in the soul of man, which is written with great simplicity, and yet dignity, and may now be read with pleasure and approbation by persons of the best taste; while most of the other writers of his age and country, are ridiculous, or hardly intelligible.

Perhaps it may help us to form right notions of simplicity, to consider what are the opposites, or the greatest enemies to it. (1) One is abstraction of sentiment, or too great refinement of any kind: of this the greatest example in an author of merit, is the writer of the Rambler; almost every page of his writings, furnishes us with instances of departure from simplicity, partly in the sentiment, and partly in the diction.

(2) Another, is allegory, and eſpecially far-fetched alluſions, as in the example which the Spectator gives of a poet, who ſpeaks of Bacchus' caſt coat: this is little better than a riddle, and even thoſe who diſcern it, will take a little time to reflect, that according to the heathen mythology, Bacchus was the God of wine; wine is kept in caſks, and therefore an empty caſk, or at leaſt an uſeleſs one, may be called Bacchus' caſt coat.

(3) A third enemy to ſimplicity, is an affectation of learning: This ſpoils ſimplicity many ways; it introduces terms of art, which cannot be underſtood, but by thoſe who are adepts in a particular branch. Such perſons have been long expoſed to ridicule under the name of pedants. Sometimes indeed, the word pedantry has been in a manner confined to thoſe addicted to claſſic literature, and who intermix every thing they ſay, with ſcraps taken from the learned languages; but this is quite improper, for lawyers, phyſicians, dunces, or ſchoolmaſters are equally ridiculous, when they fill their diſcourſe with words drawn from their particular art.

(4) The only other enemy to ſimplicity I ſhall mention, is an ambition to excel. This perhaps, ſhould not have been ſo much divided from the reſt, as made the great principle from which the reſt proceed. Nothing more certainly renders a man ridiculous, than an over forwardneſs to diſplay his excellence; he is not content with plain things, and particularly with ſuch things as every body might ſay, becauſe theſe would not diſtinguiſh him.

On the whole, as I obſerved on ſublimity, that one of the beſt and ſureſt ways to attain it was to think nobly, ſo the beſt way to write ſimply, is to think ſimply, to avoid all affectation, to attempt to form your manner of thinking to a noble ſelf-denial. A man little ſolicitous about what people think of him, or rather having his attention fixed upon quite another purpoſe, viz. giving information, or producing conviction, will only attain to a ſimple manner of writing, and indeed he will write beſt in all reſpects.

As to the mixed ſtyle or manner of writing, as it conſiſts of the mixture of the other two, I ſhall not need to ſay any thing by way of explaining it, but only make

a remark or two, of the uſe and application of it. The mixed kind of writing chiefly conſiſts of hiſtory and controverſy. The great quality neceſſary to execute it properly, is ſoundneſs of judgment, to determine on what ſubjects, and on what parts of ſubjects it is proper to write with ſimplicity, and on what with force—One would wiſh not to go beyond, but juſt to gratify a reader's inclination in this reſpect.

There are many caſes in hiſtory, where the greateſt ſublimity both of ſentiments and language, is both admitted and required, particularly all the beauty and all the force that can be admitted into deſcription, is of importance in hiſtory. Thoſe who will read in Robertſon's hiſtory of Scotland, the account he gives of the aſtoniſhment, terror and indignation that appeared in the Engliſh court, when news was brought of the maſſacre at Paris, or in the ſame author, the account of the execution of Mary queen of Scots, will ſee the force and ſublimity of deſcription. The difference between ſublimity of ſentiment and language in an hiſtorian, and in a poet or orator, ſeems to me to reſemble the difference between the fire of a managed horſe, when reined in by the rider, and marching with a firm and ſtately pace, and the ſame when ſtraining every nerve, in the eager contention in a race. We ſhall enter a little into this matter, if we conſider the different images that are made uſe of in the different arts. In poetry we ſay a beautiful, ſtriking, ſhining metaphor, fervent, glowing imagery. In oratory we ſay warm, animated, irreſiſtible. In hiſtory we uſe the words force, nobleneſs, dignity and majeſty, particularly thoſe laſt attributes, of dignity and majeſty. Herodotus has been often called the father of hiſtory, though I confeſs I apprehend he has obtained this title, chiefly becauſe of his antiquity, and his being the firſt that ever gave any thing of a regular hiſtory; but though he has ſome things auguſt enough, yet he has admitted ſo many incredible ſtories, and even peculiarities into his work, as very much detracts from its dignity; we muſt indeed impute a good deal of this to the age in which he lived, and the impoſſibility of their diſtinguiſhing truth from falſehood, ſo well

as thoſe of later ages, who have had the advantage of all paſt experience.

Hiſtory indeed, is not only of the mixed kind of writing, ſo as to admit ſometimes ſublimity, and ſometimes ſimplicity, but thoſe ſtyles ſhould be really blended together, in every part of it. The moſt noble and animated ſentiments, characters or deſcriptions in hiſtory, ſhould yet be clothed with ſuch a gravity and decency of garb, ſo to ſpeak, as to give an air of ſimplicity to the whole. It is an advantage to a poem, that the author ſays but little in his own perſon, but makes the characters ſpeak and ſay all; and in an orator it is an advantage, when he can carry the hearers off from himſelf to his ſubject; but above all, an hiſtorian ſhould not ſo much as wiſh to ſhine, but with the coolneſs of a philoſopher, and the impartiality of a judge ſhould ſet the actors and tranſactions before the reader.

Controverſy is another ſubject of the mixed kind, which ought to be in general written with ſimplicity, yet will ſometimes admit of the ornaments of eloquence: of this I ſhall ſpeak a little more afterwards, and therefore ſhall now only add, that controverſy, differs from hiſtory, in that it ſometimes admits of paſſion and warmth, when there ſeems to be a ſufficient foundation laid for it; a controverſial writer will endeavor to intereſt his reader, and excite either contempt or indignation againſt his adverſary.

After having given you this view of the three great kinds of writing, or as they are ſometimes called, different ſtyles, it may not be amiſs to obſerve, that there are diſtinctions of ſtyle, which it is proper that an able writer ſhould obſerve, that do not range themſelves, at leaſt not fully and properly, under theſe three heads, but may be ſaid to run through all the kinds of eloquence.

Many eminent authors have ſaid, that the climates have ſome effect upon the ſtyle; that in the warmer countries the ſtyle is more animated, and the figures more bold and glowing: and nothing is more common, than to aſcribe a peculiarity of ſtyle, and that particularly elevated and full of metaphor, to the orientals, as if it belonged to that part of the globe; but if I am not miſtaken, both this and other things, ſuch as courage, that have been attributed

to the climate, belong either not to the climate at all, or in a ſmall meaſure, and are rather owing to the ſtate of ſociety and manners of men. We have before had occaſion to ſee that all narrow languages are figured. In a ſtate, where there are few or no abſtract ideas, how ſhould there be abſtract terms. If any body will read the poem of Fingal, which appears to have been compoſed on the bleak hills of the north of Scotland, he will find as many figures and as bold, as in any thing compoſed in Arabia or Perſia. The ſtate of ſociety then, is what gives a particular color to the ſtyle, and by this the ſtyles of different ages and countries are diſtinguiſhed—that the climate does but little, may be ſeen juſt by comparing ancient and modern Italy; what difference between the ſtrength and force of the ancient Latin tongue, and the preſent Italian language, in the expreſſion of ſentiments? it muſt therefore vary with ſentiments and manners; and what difference between the ſtern and inflexible bravery of a free ancient Roman, and the effeminate ſoftneſs of a modern Italian? yet they breathed the ſame air, and were nurſed by the ſame ſoil. I will juſt go a little off from the ſubject to ſay, that a very late author, (Lord Kaimes) ſeems to think that the courage of mankind is governed by the climates; he ſays that the northern climates produce hardened conſtitutions, and bold and firm minds; that invaſions have been made from north to ſouth: but I apprehend, he may be miſtaken here both in his facts, and the reaſons of them—Invaſions have not always been made from north to ſouth: for the Roman arms penetrated very far to the north of their territory; the firſt great conquerors of the eaſt in Egypt and Babylon, carried their arms to the north: and where the conqueſt ran the other way, it was owing to other circumſtances; and Dean Swift ſays much nearer the truth, it was from poverty to plenty.

The deſign of this digreſſion is to ſhow, that not only the circumſtances that appear in a language, but ſeveral others that have alſo been attributed to climate, owe very little to it, but to the ſtate of mankind and the progreſs of ſociety. The maxim of that great modern writer,

Monteſquieu, which he applies to population, is alſo true of language—That natural cauſes are not by far ſo powerful as moral cauſes. Allowing, therefore, as ſome have affirmed that the northern climates may give a roughneſs and harſhneſs to the accent and pronunciation, I believe it is all that we can expect from climate; the diſtinction of ſtyles and compoſition muſt come from another original.

LECTURE X.

HAVING in a great meaſure rejected the ſuppoſition of the ſtyle in writing being affected by the climate, and ſhown that it rather takes its colour from the ſtate of ſociety, and the ſentiments and manners of men, it follows that all the great diſtinctions that take place in manners will have a correſpondent effect upon language ſpoken or written. When the manners of a people are little poliſhed, there is a plainneſs or a roughneſs in the ſtyle. Abſolute monarchies, and the obſequious ſubjection introduced at the courts of princes, occaſions a pompous ſwelling and compliment to be in requeſt, different from the boldneſs and ſometimes ferocity of republican ſtates.

Seneca in remarking upon the Roman language, ſays, Genus dicendi mutatur per publicos mores, &c. This he exemplifies in the Roman language, which was ſhort and dry in the earlieſt ages, afterwards become elegant and ornate, and at laſt looſe and diffuſe.

The ſtyle of an age alſo is ſometimes formed by ſome one or more eminent perſons, who, having obtained reputation, every thing peculiar to them is admired and copied, and carried much into exceſs. Seneca has remarked this alſo, that commonly one author obtains the palm, and becomes the model, and all copy him. Hæc vitia unus aliquis inducit. And he gives a very good example of it, of which we may now judge in Salluſt. He alſo very properly obſerves, that all the faults that ariſe from imi-

tation become worſe in the imitator than in the example. Thus reproving the fault juſt now mentioned in our anceſtors.

It is remarkable that Seneca himſelf was another example of the ſame thing. His manner of writing, which is peculiar, came to be the ſtandard of the age. His manner has been called by critics, point and antitheſis. A ſhort ſentence containing a ſtrong ſentiment, or a beautiful one, as it were like a maxim by itſelf. For an example or two of this; to expreſs the deſtruction of Lyons he ſays, Lugdunum quod oſtendebatur, &c. That Lyons, which was formerly ſhown, is now ſought. And on the ſame ſubject—Una nox, &c. There was but one night between a great city and none. Quid eſt eques Romanus, &c. What! is a Roman knight, a freed man or ſlave! names generated by ambition or oppreſſion.

The fault of this ſententious manner of writing does not lie in the particulars being blameable, but in the repetition and uniformity becoming tedious—when every paragraph is ſtuffed with ſentences and bright ſayings, generally having the ſame tune, it wearies the ear. The moſt remarkable book in the Engliſh language for putting continual ſmartneſs, ſentence and antitheſis for elegance, is the Gentleman inſtructed. I ſhall read you one paragraph—The misfortune of one breathes vigor into the others: They carry on manfully the attack—Their heads run round with the glaſſes. Their tongues ride poſt. Their wits are jaded. Their reaſon is diſtanced. Brutes could not talk better, nor men worſe. Like ſkippers in a ſtorm, they rather hallowed than ſpoke. Scarce one heard his neighbor, and not one underſtood him; ſo that noiſe ſtood for ſenſe, and every one paſſed for a virtuoſo, becauſe all played the fool to extravagance.

I ſhall not enlarge much farther upon the difference of ſtyle ariſing from the character of an age, as in the ages before the reformation, called the times of chivalry, when military proweſs was the great thing in requeſt—their gallantry and heroiſm were to be ſeen in every writer.—At the time of the reformation and the revival of learning,

their citations of the ancient writers and alluſions to the claſſic phraſes diſtinguiſhed every author. In the age of the civil wars in England, of which religion was ſo much the cauſe, alluſions to ſingular expreſſions, and theological opinions, are every where to be met with, of which the great Milton is an example.

But there is another diſtinction of ſtyles, which is chiefly perſonal, and will diſtinguiſh one author from another, in the ſame age, and perhaps of the ſame or nearly the ſame abilities. There are ſeveral different epithets given to ſtyle in our language, which I ſhall mention in a certain order, which I ſuppoſe will contribute ſomething to explain the meaning of them. We call a ſtyle, ſimple or plain, ſmooth, ſweet, conciſe, elegant, ornate, juſt, nervous, chaſte, ſevere. Theſe are all different epithets which will each of them convey to a nice critical ear, ſomething different, though I confeſs it is not eaſy to define them clearly, or explain them fully. Plainneſs and ſimplicity is when the author does not ſeem to have had any thing in view, but to be underſtood, and that by perſons of the weakeſt underſtanding. That ought to be in view in many writings, and indeed perſpicuity will be found to be a character of many ſtyles, when there are other great qualities, but we call that plain and ſimple, when there is no diſcovery of literature, and no attempt at the pathetic. Scougal's Life of God in the ſoul of man, and Dr. Evans's Sermons, are admirable patterns of this manner. (2) I would call that a ſmooth ſtyle, when the utmoſt care had been taken to meaſure the periods, and to conſult the ear on the ſtructure of the ſentence; for this I know no author more remarkable than Hervey, in his Meditations. (3) Sweetneſs ſeems to me to differ from the former only in that the ſubjects and the images are generally of a pleaſing or ſoothing nature, ſuch as may particularly be ſeen in Mrs. Rowe's Letters; perhaps alſo in a more modern compoſition by a lady, Lady Mary W. Montague's Letters. And indeed when female authors have excelled, they generally do excel in ſweetneſs. (4) The next is

conciſeneſs. This is eaſily underſtood, it is juſt as much brevity as is conſiſtent with perſpicuity. It is a beauty in every writing when other qualities are not hurt by it. But it is peculiarly proper for critical or ſcientific writing, becauſe there we do not ſo much expect or want to know the author's ſentiments, but as ſoon as poſſible to learn the facts, to underſtand them fully, and range them methodically. There are many more authors who excel in this reſpect in the French, than in the Engliſh language. Not only the ſcientific writings, but even political and moral writings are drawn up by them with great conciſeneſs. There cannot be greater conciſeneſs than in Monteſquieu's Spirit of Laws. Brown's Eſtimate of the manners and principles of the times, ſeems to be an imitation of that author in his manner. In eſſay writing, David Hume ſeems to have as happily joined conciſeneſs and perſpicuity as moſt of our Engliſh writers. Some pious writers have been as ſucceſsful this way as moſt of our nation; ſuch as Maſon's Sayings, and Maſon on Self-knowledge. (5) A ſtyle is called elegant when it is formed by the principles of true taſte, and much pains is taken to uſe the beſt and pureſt expreſſions that the language will afford. It is very common to join together eaſe and elegance. The great patterns we have of theſe are Addiſon and Tillotſon. Seed's Sermons too may be mentioned here, as very much excelling in both theſe qualities; ſo alſo does David Hume. The other Hume, author of the Elements of Criticiſm, though a very good judge of writing, ſeems in point of ſtyle to be very defective himſelf. If he has any talent, it is conciſeneſs and plainneſs; but he is at the ſame time often abrupt and harſh. (6) An ornate ſtyle may be ſaid to be ſomething more than elegant, introducing into a compoſition all the beauties of language, where they can find a place with propriety. I mentioned before, that Hervey's ſtyle in his Meditations, was exceedingly ſmooth and flowing. I may add it has alſo the qualities of elegant and ornate. That ſtyle is elegant which is correct and free from faults; that is ornate which abounds with beauties. (7) The next character

of ſtyle is, that it is juſt. By this I underſtand, a particular attention to the truth and meaning of every expreſſion. Juſtneſs is frequently joined with, or otherwiſe expreſſed by preciſion; ſo that (if I may ſpeak ſo) together with a taſte which will reliſh and produce an elegance of language, there is a judgment and accuracy which will abide the ſcrutiny of philoſophy and criticiſm. Many well turned periods and ſhowy expreſſions will be found defective here. This juſtneſs of ſtyle is ſcarcely ever found without clearneſs of underſtanding, ſo that it appears in accuracy of method, in the whole diſcourſe, as well as in the ſtyle of particular parts. Dr. Samuel Clark was a great example of this. He was one of thoſe few mathematicians who were good writers, and while he did not loſe the life and fervor of the orator, preſerved the preciſion of the natural philoſopher. (8) Nervous or ſtrong is the next character of ſtyle, and this implies that in which the author does not wholly neglect elegance and preciſion. But he is much more attentive to dignity and force. A ſtyle that is very ſtrong and nervous, might often receive a little additional poliſh by a few more epithets or copulatives, but cannot deſcend to ſuch minuteneſs. It is a fine expreſſion of Richard Baxter, upon ſtyle, "May I ſpeak plainly and pertinently, and ſomewhat "nervouſly, I have my purpoſe." Baxter was a great example of a nervous ſtyle, with great neglect of elegance, and Dean Swift is an illuſtrious example of the ſame ſort of diction, with a very conſiderable attention to elegance. Both the one and the other ſeem to write in the fullneſs of their hearts, and to me without ſcruple thoſe terms are commonly beſt, that firſt preſent themſelves to a fertile invention and warm imagination, without waiting to chooſe in their room thoſe that might be more ſmooth or ſonorous, but leſs emphatic. (9) Chaſtity of ſtyle I think ſtands particularly oppoſed to any embelliſhments that are not natural, and neceſſary. Nay, we generally mean by a very chaſte writer, one who does not admit even all the ornaments that he might, and what ornaments he does admit are always of the moſt decent kind, and the moſt properly executed. (10) Severity of ſtyle has this

title only, by way of compariſon. That is a ſevere ſtyle which has propriety, elegance and force, but ſeems rather to be above and to diſdain the ornaments which every body elſe would approve, and the greateſt part of readers would deſire.

LECTURE XI.

WE come now to the third general head, which was to ſpeak of oratory as it is divided into the ſeveral parts which conſtitute the art. Theſe have been generally the following, invention, diſpoſition, ſtyle or compoſition, pronunciation, including geſture.

1. Invention. This is nothing elſe but finding out the ſentiments by which a ſpeaker or writer would explain what he has to propoſe, and the aguments by which he would enforce it. This ſubject is treated of very largely, in moſt of the books of oratory, in which I think they judge very wrong. In by far the greateſt number of caſes, there is no neceſſity of teaching it, and where it is neceſſary, I believe it exceeds the power of man to teach it with effect. The very firſt time indeed, that a young perſon begins to compoſe, the thing is ſo new to him, that it is apt to appear dark and difficult, and in a manner impoſſible. But as ſoon as he becomes a little accuſtomed to it, he finds much more difficulty in ſelecting what is proper, than in inventing ſomething that ſeems to be tolerable. There are ſome perſons I confeſs, whom their own ſtupidity, or that of their relations, forces to attempt public ſpeaking, who are entirely barren, and not able to bring out any thing either good or bad; but this is exceedingly rare, and when it does happen, it will be ſo burdenſome to the man himſelf, that he muſt ſpeedily give over the attempt. There are infinitely more who have plenty of matter, ſuch as it is, but neither very valuable in itſelf nor clothed in proper language. I think it happens very generally that thoſe who are leaſt conciſe and accurate, are moſt lengthy and voluminous,

I will therefore not ſpend much time upon invention, leaving it to the ſpontaneous production of capacity and experience; only obſerve that it is called a common place, from whence you draw your argument. That principle of law, nature, taſte, experience, from which you fetch your topic, and apply it to your particular caſe, is a common place; as for example, if I want to prove that a ſtrict diſcipline in a ſociety is beſt, I ſay that diſcipline which will, in the moſt effectual manner reſtrain offences is certainly the beſt; this is the topic or common place.

It would be needleſs to point out the ſources of invention, or ſhow from whence arguments may be drawn, for they may be drawn from all the characters and qualities of an action or perſon, and from all the circumſtances that accompany it. If I mean to aggravate a crime or injury, I ſay it was done deliberately, obſtinately, repeatedly, without temptation, againſt many warnings, and much kindneſs, that its effects are very bad to a man's ſelf, to others, to the character, the perſon, the eſtate, &c. If I want to ſpeak in praiſe of a free government, I mention its happy effects in giving ſecurity and happineſs, promoting induſtry, encouraging genius, producing value; and then I apply to experience, and ſhow the happineſs of free ſtates, and the miſery of thoſe that have been kept in ſlavery: but I repeat the remark, that invention need not be taught, unleſs it be to one that never yet compoſed a ſentence. There have been books of common places, publiſhed, containing arguments and topics for illuſtration and even ſimilitudes—ſayings of the ancients, &c. but they are of very little uſe, unleſs to a perſon that has no fund of his own, and then one that makes uſe of them is like a man walking on ſtilts; they make him look very big, but he walks very feebly.

2. The next diviſion of the oratorial art, is diſpoſition or diſtribution. This is a matter of the utmoſt moment, and upon which inſtruction is both neceſſary and uſeful. By diſpoſition as a part of the oratorial art I mean order in general, in the whole of a diſcourſe or any kind of compoſition, be it what it will. As to the parts of which a ſingle ſpeech or oration conſiſts, they will be afterwards conſider-

ed. Before I proceed to explain or point out the way to attain good order, I would juſt mention a few of its excellencies.

(1) Good order in a diſcourſe gives light, and makes it eaſily underſtood. If things are thrown together without method, each of them will be leſs underſtood, and their joint influence in leading to a concluſion, will not be perceived. It is a noble expreſſion of Horace, who calls it *lucidos ordo*, clear order. It is common to ſay, when we hear a confuſed diſcourſe, "It had neither head nor tail, I could not underſtand what he would be at." (2) Order is neceſſary to force, as well as light; this indeed is a neceſſary conſequence of the other, for we ſhall never be perſuaded by what we do not underſtand. Very often the force of reaſoning depends upon the united influence of ſeveral diſtinct propoſitions. If they are ranged in a juſt order, they will all have their effect, and ſupport one another; if otherwiſe, it will be like a number of men attempting to raiſe a weight, and one pulling at one time, and another at another, which will do juſt nothing, but if all exert their power at once, it will be eaſily overcome.

(3) Order is alſo uſeful for aſſiſting memory. Order is neceſſary even in a diſcourſe that is to have a tranſient effect, but if any thing is intended to produce a laſting conviction, and to have a daily influence, it is ſtill more neceſſary. When things are diſpoſed in a proper order, the ſame concatenation that is in the diſcourſe, takes place in the memory, ſo that when one thing is remembered, it immediately brings to remembrance what has an eaſy and obvious connexion with it. The aſſociation of ideas linked together by any tie is very remarkable in our conſtitution, and is ſuppoſed to take place from ſome impreſſion made upon the brain. If we have ſeen two perſons but once, and ſeen them both at the ſame time only, or at the ſame place only, the remembrance of the one can hardly be ſeparated from the other. I may alſo illuſtrate the ſubject by another plain inſtance. Suppoſe I deſire a perſon going to a city, to do three or four things for me that are wholly unconnected, as to deliver a letter to one perſon—to viſit a friend of mine, and to bring me

notice how he is—to buy a certain book for me if he can find it—and to ſee whether any ſhip be to ſail for Britain ſoon, it is very poſſible he may remember ſome of them, and forget the others; but if I deſire him to buy me a dozen of ſilver ſpoons, to carry them to an engraver to put my name upon them, and get a caſe to put them in, if he remembers one article, it is likely he will remember all of them. It is one of the beſt evidences that a diſcourſe has been compoſed with diſtinctneſs and accuracy, if after you go away you can remember a good deal of it; but there are ſometimes diſcourſes which are pompous and declamatory, and which you hear with pleaſure, and ſome ſort of approbation, but if you attempt to recollect the truths advanced, or the arguments in ſupport of them, there is not a trace of them to be found.

(4) Order conduces alſo very much to beauty. Order is never omitted when men give the principles of beauty, and confuſion is diſguſtful juſt on its own account, whatever the nature of the confuſed things may be. If you were to ſee a vaſt heap of fine furniture of different kinds, lying in confuſion, you could neither perceive half ſo diſtinctly what was there, nor could it at all have ſuch an effect, as if every thing was diſpoſed in a juſt order, and placed where it ought to ſtand; nay, a much ſmaller quantity elegantly diſpoſed, would exceed in grandeur of appearance a heap of the moſt coſtly things in nature.

(5) Order is alſo neceſſary to brevity. A confuſed diſcourſe is almoſt never ſhort, and is always filled with repetitions. It is with thought in this reſpect, as with things viſible, for to return to the former ſimilitude, A confuſed heap of goods or furniture fills much more room than when it is ranged and claſſed in its proper order, and every thing carried to its proper place.

Having ſhown the excellence of preciſion and method, let us next try to explain what it is, and that I may have ſome regard to method while I am ſpeaking of the very ſubject, I ſhall take it in three lights, (1) There muſt be an attention to order in the diſpoſition of the whole piece. Whatever the parts be in themſelves, they have alſo a relation to one another, and to the whole body, (if I

may ſpeak ſo) that they are to compoſe. Every work, be it what it will, hiſtory, epic poem, dramatic poem, oration, epiſtle, or eſſay, is to be conſidered as a whole, and a clearneſs of judgment in point of method, will decide the place and proportion of the ſeveral parts of which they are compoſed. The looſeſt eſſay, or where form is leaſt profeſſed or ſtudied, ought yet to have ſome ſhape as a whole, and we may ſay of it, that it begins abruptly or ends abruptly, or ſome of the parts are miſplaced. There are often to be ſeen pieces in which good things are ſaid, and well ſaid, and have only this fault that they are unſeaſonable and out of place. Horace ſays in his art of poetry, what is equally applicable to every ſort of compoſition, " Denique ſit quod vis ſimplex duntaxat et unum," and ſhortly after " In felix operis ſumma, quia ponere totum neſciet."

This judgment in planning the whole, will particularly enable a perſon to determine both as to the place and proportion of the particular parts, whether they be not only good in themſelves, but fit to be introduced in ſuch a work, and it will alſo (If I may ſpeak ſo) give a colour to the whole compoſition. The neceſſity of order in the whole ſtructure of a piece, ſhows that the rule is good which is given by ſome, that an orator before he begin his diſcourſe, ſhould concentrate the ſubject as it were, and reduce it to one ſingle propoſition, either expreſſed or at leaſt conceived in his mind. Every thing ſhould grow out of this as its root, if it be in another principle to be explained, or refer to this as its end if it be a point to be gained by perſuaſion. Having thus ſtated the point clearly to be handled, it will afford a ſort of criterion whether any thing adduced is proper or improper. It will ſuggeſt the topics that are juſt and ſuitable, as well as enable us to reject whatever is in ſubſtance improper, or in ſize diſproportionate to the deſign. Agreeably to this principle, I think that not only the ſubject of a ſingle diſcourſe ſhould be reduceable to one propoſition, but the general diviſions or principal heads ſhould not be many in number. A great number of general heads both burdens the memory, and breaks the unity of the ſubject,

and carries the idea of ſeveral little diſcourſes joined together, or to follow after one another.

2. Order is neceſſary in the ſubdiviſions of a ſubject, or the way of ſtating and marſhalling of the ſeveral portions of any general head. This is applicable to all kinds of compoſition, and all kinds of oratory, ſermons, law pleadings, ſpeeches. There is always a diviſion of the parts, as well as of the whole, either expreſſed formally and numerically, or ſuppoſed, though ſuppreſſed. And it is as much here as any where, that the confuſion of inaccurate writers and ſpeakers appears. It is always neceſſary to have ſome notion of the whole of a piece, and the larger diviſions being more bulky, to ſo ſpeak, diſpoſition in them is more eaſily perceived, but in the ſmaller, both their order and ſize is in danger of being leſs attended to. Obſerve, therefore, that to be accurate and juſt, the ſubdiviſions of any compoſition, ſuch I mean as are (for example) introduced in a numerical ſeries, 1, 2, 3, &c. ſhould have the following properties: (1.) They ſhould be clear and plain. Every thing indeed ſhould be clear as far as he can make it, but preciſion and diſtinctneſs ſhould eſpecially appear in the ſubdiviſions, juſt as the bounding lines of countries in a map. For this reaſon the firſt part of a ſubdiviſion ſhould be a like a ſhort definition, and when it can be done, it is beſt expreſſed in a ſingle term; for example, in giving the character of a man of learning, I may propoſe to ſpeak of his genius, his erudition, his indnſtry or application.

(2.) They ſhould be truly diſtinct; that is, every body ſhould perceive that they are really different from one another, not in phraſe or word only, but in ſentiment. If you praiſe a man firſt for his judgment, and then for his underſtanding; they are either altogether or ſo nearly the ſame, or ſo nearly allied, as not to require diſtinction. I have heard a miniſter on John xvii. 11. Holy Father, &c. In ſhowing how God keeps his people, ſays, (1) He keeps their feet. He ſhall keep thy feet from falling. (2.) He keeps their way. Thou ſhalt keep him in all his ways. Now, it is plain that theſe are not two different things, but two metaphors for the ſame thing. This indeed was

faulty alſo in another reſpect; for a metaphor ought not to make a diviſion at all.

(3.) Sub-diviſions ſhould be neceſſary; that is to ſay taking the word in the looſe and popular ſenſe, the ſubject ſhould ſeem to demand them. To multiply diviſions, even where they may be made really diſtinct, is tedious, and diſguſtful, unleſs where they are of uſe and importance to our clearly comprehending the meaning, or feeling the force of what is ſaid. If a perſon in the map of a country ſhould give a different colour to every three miles, though the equality of the proportion would make the diviſion clear enough, yet it would appear diſguſtingly ſuperfluous. In writing the hiſtory of an eminent perſon's life, to divide it into ſpaces of 10 years, perhaps would make the view of the whole more exact; but to divide it into ſingle years or months, would be finical and diſagreeable. The increaſe of diviſions leads almoſt unavoidably into tedioufneſs.

(4.) Sub-diviſions ſhould be co-ordinate; that is to ſay, thoſe that go on in a ſeries, 1, 2, 3, &c. ſhould be as near as poſſible ſimilar, or of the ſame kind. This rule is tranſgreſſed when either the things mentioned are wholly different in kind, or when they include one another. This will be well perceived if we conſider how a man would deſcribe a ſenſible ſubject, a country for example; New-Jerſey contains (1) Middleſex. (2) Somerſet county. (3) The townſhips of Princeton (4) Morris county. So, if one in deſcribing the character of a real Chriſtian, ſhould ſay, faith, holineſs, charity, juſtice, temperance, patience, this would not do, becauſe holineſs includes juſtice, &c. When, therefore, it ſeems neceſſary to mention different particulars that cannot be made co-ordinate, they ſhould be made ſubordinate.

(5.) Sub-diviſions ſhould be complete, and exhauſt the ſubject. This indeed is common to all diviſions, but is of moſt importance here, where it is moſt neglected. It may be ſaid, perhaps, how can we propoſe to exhauſt any ſubject? By making the diviſions ſuitable, particularly in point of comprehenſion, to the nature of the ſubject; as an example, and to make uſe of the image before introduced

of giving an account of a country—I may ſay, the province of New-Jerſey conſiſts of two parts, Eaſt and Weſt Jerſey. If I ſay it conſiſts of the counties of Somerſet, &c. I muſt continue till I have enumerated all the counties, otherwiſe the diviſion is not complete. In the ſame manner in public ſpeaking, or any other compoſition, whatever diviſion is made, it is not legitimate if it does not include or exhauſt the whole ſubject, which may be done, let it be ever ſo great. For example: true religion may be divided various ways, ſo as to include the whole, I may ſay, that it conſiſts of our duty to God, our neighbour and ourſelves—or I may make but two, our duty to God and man, and divide the laſt into two ſubordinate heads, our neighbour, and ourſelves—or I may ſay, it conſiſts of faith and practice—or that it conſiſts of two parts, a right frame and temper of mind, and a good life and converſation.

(6.) Laſtly, the ſub-diviſions of any ſubject ſhould be connected, or ſhould be taken in a ſeries or order if they will poſſibly admit of it. In ſome moral and intellectual ſubjects it may not be eaſy to find any ſeries or natural order, as in an enumeration of virtues, juſtice, temperance and fortitude. Patience perhaps might as well be enumerated in any other order; yet there is often an order that will appear natural, and the inverſion of it unnatural —as we may ſay, injuries are done many ways to a man's perſon, character and poſſeſſions. Love to others includes the relation of family, kindred, citizens, countrymen, fellow-creatures.

(3.) In the laſt place there is alſo an order to be obſerved in the ſentiments, which makes the illuſtration or amplification of the diviſions of a diſcourſe. This order is never expreſſed by numerical diviſions, yet it is of great importance, and its beauty and force will be particularly felt. It is, if I may ſpeak ſo, of a finer and more delicate nature than any of the others, more various, and harder to explain. I once have ſaid, that all reaſoning is of the nature of a ſyllogiſm, which lays down principles, makes compariſons, and draws the concluſion. But we muſt particularly guard againſt letting the uniformity

and formality of a ſyllogiſm appear. In general, whatever eſtabliſhes any connection, ſo that it makes the ſentiments give riſe to one another, is the occaſion of order—ſometimes neceſſity and utility point out the order as a good meaſure—As in telling a ſtory, grave or humorous, you muſt begin by deſcribing the perſons concerned, mentioning juſt as many circumſtances of their character and ſituation as are neceſſary to make us underſtand the facts to be afterwards related. Sometimes the ſenſible ideas of time and place ſuggeſt an order, not only in hiſtorical narrations and in law pleadings, which relate to facts, but in drawing of characters, deſcribing the progreſs and effects of virtue and vice, and even in other ſubjects, where the connexion between thoſe ideas and the thing ſpoken of, is not very ſtrong.—Sometimes, and indeed generally, there is an order which proceeds from things plain to things obſcure. The beginning of a paragraph ſhould be like the ſharp point of a wedge, which gains admittance to the bulky part behind. It firſt affirms what every body feels or muſt confeſs, and proceeds to what follows as a neceſſary conſequence: In fine, there is an order in perſuaſion to a particular choice, which may be taken two ways with equal advantage, proceeding from the weaker to the ſtronger, or from the ſtronger to the weaker. As in recommending a pious and virtuous life, we may firſt ſay it is amiable, honorable, pleaſant, profitable, even in the preſent life; and, to crown all, makes death itſelf a friend, and leads to a glorious immortality; or, we may begin the other way, and ſay it is the one thing needful, that eternity is the great and deciſive argument that ſhould determine our choice, though every thing elſe were in favor of vice, and then add, that even in the preſent life, it is a great miſtake to think that bad men are gainers, &c. This is called ſometimes the aſcending and deſcending climax. Each of them has its beauty and uſe. It muſt be left to the orator's judgment to determine which of the two is either fitteſt for the preſent purpoſe, or which he finds himſelf at that time able to execute to the greateſt advantage.

LECTURE XII.

THE next branch of this diviſion is ſtyle or compoſition. This, which is ſo great a part of the ſubject, has already been conſidered in one view, under the three great kinds of writing, and will again be mentioned under the two following heads, as well as the remarks at the cloſe: yet I will drop a few things upon it in this place. 1. It is neceſſary that a writer or ſpeaker ſhould be well acquainted with the language in which he ſpeaks, its characters, properties and defect, its idioms or peculiar terms and phraſes, and likewiſe with as many other languages as poſſible, particularly ſuch as are called the learned languages, the Latin and Greek—Our own language is the Engliſh. A thorough acquaintance with it, muſt be acquired by extenſive reading in the beſt authors, giving great attention to the remarks made by critics of judgment and erudition, and trying it ourſelves in practice. Our language, like moſt of the northern languages, is rough, with a frequent meeting of conſonants, difficult of pronunciation; it abounds in monoſyllables. you may write a whole page, and ſcarce uſe one word that has more than one ſyllable; this is a defect, and to be avoided when it can be done conſiſtently with other properties, particularly ſimplicity and perſpicuity. Our language is ſaid to have an over proportion of the letter S, and therſore called a hiſſing language. This a writer of judgment will endeavor to avoid, wherever he can do it with propriety and elegance. A thorough acquaintance with the genius and idioms of our own language, can ſcarcely be attained without ſome acquaintance with others, becauſe it is compariſon of one with another which illuſtrates all. There are not only ſmaller differences between one language and another, but there are ſome general differences in the arrangement of words, in the ancient and modern languages: in the Greek and Latin, the governed words are pretty generally before the verb. It is a miſtake for us to ſay

that the Engliſh order is the natural order, as ſome have done—It is certain that they are either both alike natural and equally obvious, when once cuſtom has fixed them, or that the ancient order is the more natural of the two. There are two things, the action and the object, to be conjoined, and it is fully as proper to turn your attention firſt to the object, before you tell what you are to ſay of it, or what you would have done with it, as after. Iſtud ſcalpellum quod in manu habes, commoda mihi pauliſper, ſi placet: and in longer and more involved ſentences, the ſuſpending the ſentiment for ſome time till it be compleated, is both more pleaſing and more forcible. Our own language admits of a little tranſpoſition, and becomes grander and more ſonorous by it, both in poetry and proſe.

2. We may attend to the arrangement of the clauſes of a ſentence, and their proportion and ſound. Every ſentence may be conſidered as having ſo many clauſes or members, which have, each of them, ſome meaning, but which is not complete till it is cloſed. Every ſentence is capable of receiving ſome degree of harmony, by a proper ſtructure; this it receives when the moſt important ideas, and the moſt ſonorous expreſſions occupy the chief places; but what, you will ſay, are the chief places? We naturally, ſays an eminent French author on this ſubject, love to preſent our moſt intereſting ideas firſt; but this order which is dictated by ſelf-love, is contrary to what we are directed to by the art of pleaſing—The capital law of this art, is to prefer others to ourſelves, and therefore the moſt ſtriking and intereſting ideas come with the greateſt beauty as well as force, in the cloſe. Where the difference does not lie in the ideas, the words or phraſes that are moſt long and ſonorous ought to be ſo diſtinguiſhed; this rule however, will admit ſome exception, when we are to perſuade or inſtruct, for we muſt never ſeem to have ſweetneſs and cadence chiefly in view.

The rule of placing in a ſentence the moſt important ideas and expreſſions laſt, was taken notice of by ancient writers. In verbis obſervandum eſt, ſays one of them, ut a majoribus ad minus deſcendat oratio, melius enim dicetur, vir eſt optimus, quam vir optimus eſt. Some-

times ſeveral monyſyllables terminate a ſentence well enough, becauſe in pronunciation they run into one, and ſeem to the hearers little different from a ſingle word. It is an obſervation, that the ear itſelf often directs to the rule upon this ſubject. Some French critics obſerve that ſome ſyllables in their language which are uſually ſhort, are produced in the end of a ſentence, for inſtance, Je ſuis votre ſerviteur monſieur, je ſuis le votre; where *votre* is ſhort in the firſt ſentence, and long in the ſecond; and I believe the ſame thing would happen in tranſlating that ſentence literally into Engliſh.

The harmony of ſentences is preſerved either by a meaſured proportion, or regular gradation of the clauſes: Cicero ſays upon this ſubject, Si membra, &c. In every ſentence conſiſting of two members only, every body's ear will make them ſenſible, that the laſt clauſe after the pauſe of the voice ought to be longeſt; as in Shakeſpear, But yeſterday, &c. In longer ſentences there muſt be a greater variety, and ſeveral cauſes muſt contribute to determine the length of the clauſes; but it is plain, the laſt muſt be longer than the preceding; and ſometimes a regular gradation of more than two clauſes, has a very happy effect; ſuch as theſe of Cicero, Quorum quæſtor fueram, &c. Again he ſays in the ſame oration, Habet honorem, &c. There is another order in which there are two equal, and one unequal member, and in that caſe when the unequal member is ſhorteſt, it ought to be placed firſt; when it is longeſt, it ought to be placed laſt, as in the two following examples; Teſtis eſt Africa, &c. and Eripite nos ex miſeris, &c. There is another ſtructure of the members of a ſentence, in which this rule is departed from, and yet it pleaſes, becauſe of a certain exact proportion, as that of Monſieur Fenelon, Dans ſa douleur, &c. The firſt and laſt members are equal, and that which is in the middle is juſt double to each of them.

Perhaps it will be aſked, Muſt an author then give attention to this preciſe meaſure? Muſt he take a pair of ſcales or compaſſes to meaſure every period he compoſes? By no means. Nothing would be more frigid and unſucceſsful, but it was proper thus to analyſe the ſubject, and

ſhow in what manner the ear is pleaſed; at the ſame time there is ſo great a variety and compaſs in the meaſures of proſe, that it is eaſy to vary the ſtructure and cadence, and make every thing appear quite ſimple and natural. This leads me to the third remark upon ſtyle.

3. That variety is to be particularly ſtudied. If a writer thinks any particular ſtructure neceſſary, and forces every thing he has to ſay juſt into that form, it will be highly diſagreeable, or if he is much enamoured with one particular kind of ornament, and brings it in too frequently, it will immediately diſguſt. There is a mixture in the principles of taſte, a deſire of uniformity and variety, ſimplicity and intricacy, and it is by the happy union of all theſe, that delight is moſt effectually produced. What elſe is neceſſary upon ſtyle, will fall very properly under ſome of the following heads.

The laſt part of the oratorial art is pronunciation, including geſture. This is of the utmoſt, and indeed of univerſally confeſſed importance. The effects of the different manner of delivering the ſame thing are very great. It is a famous ſubject, largely treated of by all critical writers. It ſeems to have been nicely ſtudied by the ancients, and if we may judge from ſome circumſtances, their action has been often very violent. We are told of Cicero, that when he firſt went to the bar, the violence of his action, and what is called contentio laterum, was ſuch as endangered his conſtitution, ſo that he took a journey for his health, and on his return took to a more cool and managed way of ſpeaking. There is alſo ſomewhere in his writings, an expreſſion to this purpoſe, nec fuit etiam, quod minimum eſt, ſupploſio pedis. As if ſtamping with the foot had been one of the leaſt violent motions then in uſe. We cannot judge of this matter very well at ſuch a diſtance. There is a difference in the turn of different nations upon this ſubject. The French and Italians have much more warmth and fire in their manner than the Britiſh. I remember once to have been told that no man could perceive the beauty of Raphael's picture of Paul preaching at Athens, unleſs he had ſeen a Frenchman or Italian in the pulpit.

Leaving you to read and digeſt all the criticiſms and remarks upon this ſubject to be met with in different authors, I ſhall only give a few directions that I eſteem moſt uſeful for avoiding improprieties and attaining ſome degree of excellence in this reſpect.

1. Study great ſincerity; try to forget every purpoſe but the very end of ſpeaking, information and perſuaſion. Labor after that ſort of preſence of mind which ariſes from ſelf-denial, rather than from courage. Nothing produces more aukwardneſs than confuſion and embarraſſment. Bring a clown into a magnificent palace, and let him have to appear in the preſence of perſons of high rank, and the fear and ſolicitude he has about his own carriage and diſcourſe, makes both the one and the other much more abſurd and aukward than it would have otherwiſe been.

2. Learn diſtinct articulation, and attend to all the common rules of reading, which are taught in the Engliſh grammars. Articulation is giving their full force and powers to the conſonants as well as the vowels. The difference between a well articulated diſcourſe and one defective in this reſpect, is, that the firſt you will hear diſtinctly as far as you can hear the voice; the other you will hear ſound enough, yet not underſtand almoſt any thing that is ſaid. Practice in company is a good way to learn this and ſeveral other excellencies in diſcourſe.

3. Another rule is to keep to the tone and key of dialogue, or common converſation, as much as poſſible. In common diſcourſe where there is no affectation, men ſpeak properly. At leaſt, though even here there are differences from nature—ſome ſpeaking with more ſweetneſs and grace than others, yet there is none that falls into any of thoſe unnatural rants or ridiculous geſtures, that are ſometimes to be ſeen in public ſpeakers.

4. It is of conſiderable conſequence to be accuſtomed to decency of manners in the beſt company. This gives an eaſe of carriage and a ſenſe of delicacy, which is of great uſe in forming the deportment of an orator.

5. In the laſt place, every one ſhould conſider not only what is the manner, beſt in itſelf, or even beſt ſuited to

the ſubject, but what is alſo beſt ſuited to his own capacity. One of a quick animated ſpirit by nature, may allow himſelf a much greater violence of action, than one of a colder diſpoſition. If this laſt works himſelf up to violence, or ſtudies to expreſs much paſſion, he will not probably be able to carry it through, but will relapſe into his own natural manner, and by the ſenſible difference between one part of his diſcourſe and another, render himſelf ridiculous. Solemnity of manner ſhould be ſubſtituted by all ſuch perſons in the room of fire.

LECTURE XIII.

WE come now to the fourth general diviſion of this ſubject, which is, that its object or end is different. The ends a writer or ſpeaker may be ſaid to aim at, are information, demonſtration, perſuaſion and entertainment. I need ſcarce tell you that theſe are not ſo wholly diſtinct, but that they are frequently intermixed, and that more than one of them may be in view at the ſame time. Perſuaſion is alſo uſed in a ſenſe that includes them all. The intention of all ſpeech, or writing, which is but recorded ſpeech, is to perſuade, taking the word with latitude. Yet I think you will eaſily perceive that there are very different ſorts of compoſition, in ſome of which one of the above mentioned purpoſes, and in others a different one, takes the lead, and gives the colour to the whole performance. Great benefit will ariſe from keeping a clear view of what is the end propoſed. It will preſerve the writer from a vitious and miſtaken taſte. The ſame thoughts, the ſame phraſeology, the ſame ſpirit in general running through a writing, is highly proper in one caſe, and abſurd in another. There is a beauty in every kind of writing when it is well done, and impropriety or bad taſte will ſometimes ſhow themſelves in pieces very inconſiderable—If it were but inditing a meſſage card, penning an article in a news-paper, or drawing up an advertiſement, perſons accuſtomed to

each of theſe, will be able to keep to the common form, or beaten track; but if any thing different is to be ſaid, good ſenſe, and propriety, or their contraries, will ſoon ſhow themſelves.

The writings which have information as their chief purpoſe, are hiſtory, fable, epiſtolary writing, the common intercourſe of buſineſs or friendſhip, and all the lower kinds. The properties which ſhould reign in them, are the following, (1) Plainneſs. (2) Fulneſs, (3) Preciſion, and (4) Order. Plainneſs it is evident they ought to have; and indeed not barely perſpicuity, ſo as to be intelligible, but an unaffected ſimplicity, ſo as not to ſeem to have any thing higher in view than to be underſtood. (2) When we ſay that fulneſs is a property of writings which have information as their purpoſe, it is not meant to recommend a long or diffuſe narration, but to intimate that nothing ſhould be omitted in giving an account of any thing, which is of importance to its being truly and completely underſtood. Let a writer be as large as he pleaſes in what he ſays, if he omits circumſtances as eſſential as thoſe he mentions, and which the reader would naturally deſire to know, he is not full. Many are very tedious, and yet not full. The excellence of a narrative is to contain as many ideas as poſſible, provided they are intereſting, and to convey them in as few words as poſſible, conſiſtently with perſpicuity. (3) Preciſion as a quality of narration belongs chiefly to language. Words ſhould be choſen that are truly expreſſive of the thing in view, and all ambiguous as well as ſuperfluous phraſes carefully avoided. The reader is impatient to get to the end of a ſtory, and therefore he muſt not be ſtopped by any thing but what you are ſure he would be glad to know before he proceeds further. (4) The laſt particular is order, which is neceſſary in all writings, but eſpecially in narration. There it lies chiefly in time and place, and a breach of order in theſe reſpects is more eaſily diſcerned and more univerſally offenſive than in any other. Common hearers do not always know when you violate order in ranging the arguments on a moral ſubject; but if you bring in a ſtory ab-

ruptly, or tell it confuſedly, either in a letter or a diſcourſe, it will be inſtantly perceived, and thoſe will laugh at you who could not tell it a whit better themſelves.

Imagination is not to be much uſed in writings of the narrative kind. Its chief uſe in ſuch writings is in deſcription. A man of a warm fancy will paint ſtrongly, and a man of a ſentimental turn will intereſt the affections even by a mere recital of facts. But both the one and the other ſhould be kept in great moderation; for a warm fancy is often joined to credulity, and the ſentimental perſon is given to invention: ſo that he will turn a real hiſtory into half a romance. In hiſtory a certain cool and diſpaſſionate dignity is the leading beauty. The writer ſhould appear to have no intereſt in characters or events, but deliver them as he finds them. The character which an illuſtrious hiſtorian acquires from this ſelf-denial, and being, as it were, ſuperior to all the perſonages, how great ſoever, of whom he treats, has ſomething awful and venerable in it. It is diſtinguiſhed by this circumſtance, from the applauſe given to the poet or orator.

Demonſtration is the end in view in all ſcientific writings, whether eſſays, ſyſtems, or controverſy. The excellencies of this kind of writing may be reduced to the three following: Perſpicuity, order, and ſtrength. The two firſt are neceſſary here as every where elſe, and the compoſition ſhould be ſtrong and nervous to produce a laſting conviction; more force of language is to be admitted, at leaſt more generally in this kind than in the former; but a great deal leſs of imagination and fancy than even there. Whenever a ſcientific writer begins to paint and adorn, he is forgetting himſelf and diſguſting his reader. This will be ſenſibly felt if you apply it to the mathematics. The mathematician is converſant only with ſenſible ideas, and therefore the more naked and unadorned every thing that he ſays is, ſo much the better. How would it look if a mathematician ſhould ſay, do you ſee this beautiful, ſmall, taper, acute angle? It always approaches to this abſurdity, when in ſearching after abſtract truth, writers introduce imagination and fancy. I am ſenſible that, having mentioned controverſy as be-

longing to this claſs, many may be ſurpriſed that I have excluded imagination altogether, ſince commonly all controverſial writers do, to the utmoſt of their ability, enliſt imagination in the ſervice of Reaſon. There is nothing they are ſo fond of as expoſing the weakneſs of their adverſaries by ſtrokes of raillery and humor. This I did on purpoſe that I may ſtate this matter to you clearly. Controverſy ſhould mean, and very generally ſuch writers pretend to mean, weighing the arguments on each ſide of a conteſted queſtion, in order to diſcover the truth. What ſtrong profeſſions of impartiality have we ſometimes from the very champions of a party quarrel? while yet it is plain that ſearching after truth is what they never think of, but maintaining, by every art, the cauſe which they have already eſpouſed.

I do not deny that there are ſometimes good reaſons for making uſe of ſatire and ridicule, in controverſies of the political kind, and ſometimes it is neceſſary in ſelf-defence. If any writer in behalf of a party, attempts to expoſe his adverſaries to public ſcorn, he ought not to be ſurpriſed if the meaſure he metes to others, is meaſured out to him again. What is unlawful in the aggreſſor, becomes juſtifiable, if not laudable, in the defender. Sometimes it is neceſſary to expoſe tyrants or perſons in power, who do not reaſon, but puniſh, and ſometimes it is neceſſary to bring down ſelf-ſufficient perſons, with whom there is no dealing till there pride is levelled a little with this diſmaying weapon. Dr. Brown has ſet this matter in a very clear light in his Eſſays on the Characteriſtics, where he ſays, that ridicule is not the teſt of truth, but it may be very uſeful to expoſe and diſgrace known falſhood.

But when controverſy is really an impartial ſearch after truth, it is the fartheſt diſtant imaginable, either from paſſionate declamation on the one hand, or ſallies of wit and humor on the other. There is one inſtance of a controverſy carried on between Dr. Butler and Dr. Clark, upon the ſubject of ſpace and perſonal identity, in which there did not ſeem to be any deſign upon either ſide, but to diſcover the truth. It ended in the entire conviction and ſatisfaction of one of them, which he readily and openly acknowledged: and I think in ſuch an inſtance there is

much greater glory to be had in yielding, than in conquering. There is great honor in candidly acknowledging a miſtake, but not much in obtaining a victory in ſupport of truth. It is worth while juſt to mention, that this was far from being the caſe in another controverſy before two, who were alſo very great men, Mr. Locke and Dr. Stillingfleet, upon innate ideas. They not only ſupported each his ſentiments, with warmth and keenneſs, but deſcended to all the malice of perſonal reproach, and all the littleneſs of verbal criticiſm.

The next great end that may be in view is perſuaſion. This being the great and general ſubject of oratory, has had moſt ſaid upon it in every age. That you may underſtand what I mean by diſtinguiſhing it from information, demonſtration, and entertainment, obſerve, that perſuaſion is when we would bring the reader or hearer to a determinate choice, either immediately upon the ſpot for a particular deciſion, as in an aſſembly or court of juſtice, or in a more ſlow and laſting way, as in religious and moral writings. But particularly perſuaſion is underſtood to be in view, as the effect of a ſingle diſcourſe. When this is the purpoſe, there are opportunities for all the ways of ſpeaking within the compaſs of the oratorial art. There are times when an orator muſt narrate ſimply —there are times when he muſt reaſon ſtrongly—and there are times when he may wound ſatirically. It muſt be remembered, however, that too great an infuſion of wit takes away both from the dignity and force of an oration. We ſhall ſee under the next head that it cannot be admitted in religious inſtruction, but when you are ſpeaking againſt an adverſary that is proud and conceited; or when you want to make your hearers deſpiſe any perſon or thing, as well as hate them, wit and ſatire may be of uſe. A miniſter of ſtate is very often attacked in this way with propriety, and ſucceſs. It is ſometimes allowed to relieve the ſpirits of the audience when they begin to flag. In this view Cicero recommends the *urbanitas*, and practiſes it himſelf; but at the ſame time he intimates that it ſhould be done ſparingly, and with caution —*Quo tanquam sale conspergatur oratio.* Wit, there-

fore, is to be abſolutely excluded from ſcientific writings, and very rarely to be uſed in ſerious perſuaſion.

The laſt end of ſpeaking and writing I ſhall mention, is entertainment. This includes all ſuch writings as have the amuſement or entertainment of the hearers or readers as the only, the chief, or at leaſt one great end of the compoſition. This is the caſe with all poetical compoſitions. They may pretend to write for the inſtruction of others, but to pleaſe them and obtain their favor is probably more their purpoſe. At any rate they muſt content themſelves with taking in both, and ſay with Horace, *Et prodesse volunt & delectare poetæ.* Sweetneſs, tenderneſs, and elegance of ſtyle, ought to characterize theſe ſorts of compoſition. Here is the greateſt room for imagination and fancy. Here is the dominion of wit and humor. It is an obſervation of ſome, that the word *humor* is peculiar to the Engliſh language; that the *eutrapelia* in Greek; *sales & urbanitas*, in Latin, have all the ſame meaning with our general term *wit;* but that *humor* denotes a particular kind of wit conſiſting chiefly of irony. But if the word is peculiar to the Engliſh language, it is certain that the thing itſelf is far from being peculiar to the Engliſh nation. Perhaps Homer's Batrychomachia may be ſaid to be the moſt ancient example of it upon record. Lucian's Dialogues have it in high perfection, though it muſt be owned that it ſeems particularly to have flouriſhed in modern times. Fontenelle's Dialogues of the Dead, and Boileau's Satires, are famous examples of it; but none ever exceeded Cervantes, the celebrated author of Don Quixotte. That piece is highly entertaining to an Engliſh reader under two great diſadvantages. One is, its being tranſlated into another language. Now, wit is more difficult to tranſlate than any other ſubject of compoſition. It is eaſier to tranſlate undiminiſhed the force of eloquence, than the poignancy of wit. The other diſadvantage is, its being written in ridicule of a character that now no more exiſts; ſo that we have not the opportunity of comparing the copy with the original.

We muſt alſo obſerve that wit in general, and this ſpecies of it in particular, has often appeared in the higheſt perfection in Britain, both in proſe and poetry; Shakeſpear's dramatic pieces abound with it, and Dr. Donnes' Satires. It is in high perfection in Marvel's Rehearſal tranſproſed; Alſop's Melius Inquirendum; but above all, in Swift's writings, proſe and verſe.

It is obſerved ſometimes, that the talent of humor is often poſſeſſed in a very high degree, by perſons of the meaneſt rank, who are themſelves ignorant of it; in them it appears chiefly in converſation, and in a manner that cannot be eaſily put upon paper. But as to thoſe who think fit to try this manner from the preſs, they ſhould be well aſſured before hand, that they really poſſeſs the talent. In many other particulars, a real taſte for it, and a high admiration of any thing, is a conſiderable ſign of ſome degree of the talent itſelf; but it is far from being ſo in wit and humour. Mr. Pope tells us that "Gentle dullneſs ever loves a joke;" and we ſee every day people aiming at wit, who produce the moſt miſerable and ſhocking performances: ſometimes they do not excite laughter, but loathing or indignation; ſometimes they do excite laughter, but it is that of contempt. There is a diſtinction which every one ſhould endeavour to underſtand and remember, between a wit and a droll; the firſt makes you laugh at what he ſays, and the object of his ſatire, and the ſecond makes you laugh at his own expenſe, from his abſurdity and meanneſs.

LECTURE XIV.

WE come now to the fifth general diviſion of eloquence, as its ſubject is different, under which we may conſider the three great diviſions of the pulpit, the bar, and promiſcuous aſſemblies; all the general principles of compoſition are common to theſe three kinds, nor can any man make a truly diſtinguiſhed figure in any one of them, without being well acquainted with literature and

taſte. Some peculiarities in different ways of writing, have been already touched at, all which I ſuppoſe you gave attention to; but there are ſtill ſome differences, as the ſcene in which a man is to move in life is different, which are highly worthy of obſervation. I will therefore conſider each of theſe ſeparately, and try to point out the qualities for which it ought to be diſtinguiſhed; or delineate the character of an accompliſhed miniſter, lawyer and ſenator.

I begin with the pulpit. Preaching the goſpel of Chriſt is a truly noble employment, and the care of ſouls a very important truſt. The qualities of moſt importance, I think are as follow.

1. Piety—To have a firm belief of that goſpel he is called to preach, and a lively ſenſe of religion upon his own heart. Duty, intereſt and utility all conſpire in requiring this qualification; it is of the utmoſt moment in itſelf, and what men will the leaſt diſpenſe with, in one of that profeſſion. All men good and bad, agree in deſpiſing a looſe or profane miniſter. It diſcovers a terrible degree of depravity of heart, and thoſe that begin ſo, ſeldom alter for the better. The very familiar acquaintance which they acquire with ſerious thoughts and ſpiritual ſubjects, ſerves to harden them againſt the arrows of conviction, and it is little wonder that for ſuch daring wickedneſs, God ſhould leave them to themſelves, or ſentence them to perpetual barrenneſs; but whilſt I think it my duty thus to warn you, I muſt beg leave to guard it againſt abuſe, leſt while we are aggravating the ſin of profane miniſters, others ſhould think themſelves at liberty, who have no view to that ſacred office. We have even ſeen perſons decline the ſacred office becauſe they did not think they had true religion, and then with ſeeming eaſe and quietneſs ſet themſelves to ſome other buſineſs, as if in that there was no need of religion at all. Alas! after all that can be ſaid of the guilt and danger of an irreligious miniſter, there is an infinite danger to every one who ſhall go out of this life, an irreligious man. Will it not be poor conſolation think you, in the hour of ſickneſs or death, that though you muſt periſh everlaſtingly, you go to hell not as a mi-

niſter, but a lawyer or a phyſician. I do truly think this has been a pillow of ſecurity to many poor thoughtleſs ſouls, and that they have actually rid themſelves of conviction, by this miſtaken comfort, as if there was much merit in it, that they would not be miniſters, becauſe they wanted religion. Remember this then, in a ſingle word, that there is neither profeſſion nor ſtation, from the king on the throne to the beggar on the dunghill, to whom a concern for eternity, is not the *one thing needful.*

But let me juſt take notice of the great advantage of true religion to one deſtined for the work of the miniſtry. (1.) It gives a man the knowledge that is of moſt ſervice to a miniſter. Experimental knowledge is ſuperior to all other, and neceſſary to the perfection of every other kind. It is indeed the very poſſeſſion or daily exerciſe of that which it is the buſineſs of his life, and the duty of his office, to explain and recommend. Experimental knowledge is the beſt ſort in every branch, but it is neceſſary in divinity, becauſe religion is what cannot be truly underſtood, unleſs it is felt.

(2) True piety will direct a man in the choice of his ſtudies. The object of human knowledge is ſo extenſive, that nobody can go through the whole, but religion will direct the ſtudent to what may be moſt profitable to him, and will alſo ſerve to turn into its proper channel all the knowledge he may otherwiſe acquire.

(3.) It will be a powerful motive to diligence in his ſtudies. Nothing ſo forcible as that in which eternity has a part. The duty to a good man is ſo preſſing, and the object ſo important, that he will ſpare no pains to obtain ſucceſs.

(4.) True religion will give unſpeakable force to what a miniſter ſays. There is a piercing and a penetrating heat in that which flows from the heart, which diſtinguiſhes it both from the coldneſs of indifference, and the falſe fire of enthuſiaſm and vain-glory. We ſee that a man truly pious, has often eſteem, influence and ſucceſs, though his parts may be much inferior to others, who are more capable, but leſs conſcientious. If then, piety makes even the weakeſt, venerable, what muſt it do when added

to the fineſt natural talents, and the beſt acquired endowments?

(5.) It adds to a miniſter's inſtruction, the weight of his example. It is a trite remark, that example teaches better than precept. It is often a more effectual reprimand to vice, and a more inciting argument to the practice of virtue, than the beſt of reaſoning. Example is more intelligible than precept—Precepts are often involved in obſcurity, or warped by controverſy; but a holy life immediately reaches, and takes poſſeſſion of the heart.

If I have lengthened out this particular beyond the proportion of the reſt, I hope you will forgive it for its importance, and obſerve as the concluſion of the whole, that one devoted to the ſervice of the goſpel, ſhould be *really*, *visibly*, and *eminently* holy.

2. Another character which ſhould diſtinguiſh pulpit eloquence, is ſimplicity. Simplicity is beautiful every where; it is of importance that young perſons ſhould be formed to a taſte for it, and more diſpoſed to exceed here than in the oppoſite extreme, but if I am not miſtaken, it is more beautiful, and the tranſgreſſions of it more offenſive, in the pulpit, than any where elſe. If I heard a lawyer pleading in ſuch a ſtyle and manner, as was more adapted to diſplay his own talents than to carry his client's cauſe, it would conſiderably leſſen him in my eſteem, but if I heard a miniſter acting the ſame part, I ſhould not be ſatisfied with contempt, but hold him in deteſtation.

There are ſeveral obvious reaſons why ſimplicity is more eſpecially neceſſary to a miniſter than any other. (1) Many of his audience are poor ignorant creatures. If he mean to do them any ſervice, he muſt keep to what they underſtand, and that requires more ſimplicity than perſons without experience can eaſily imagine. It is remarkable that at the firſt publication it was a character of the goſpel that it was preached to the poor. In this our bleſſed maſter was diſtinguiſhed both from the heathen philoſophers and Jewiſh teachers, who confined their inſtructions in a great manner to their ſchools, and imparted what they eſteemed their moſt important diſ-

courſes to only a few choſen diſciples. (2) Simplicity is neceſſary to preſerve the ſpeaker's character for ſincerity. You heard before how neceſſary piety is, which is the proper parent of ſincerity in the pulpit. Now it is not eaſy to preſerve the opinion of piety and ſincerity in the pulpit, when there is much ornament. Beſides the danger of much affected pomp or foppery of ſtyle, a diſcourſe very highly poliſhed, even in the trueſt taſte, is apt to ſuggeſt to the audience, that a man is preaching himſelf and not the croſs of Chriſt. So nice a matter is this in all public ſpeaking, that ſome critics ſay, that Demoſthenes put on purpoſe ſome errors in grammar in his diſcourſes, that the hearers might be induced to take them for the immediate effuſions of the heart, without art, and with little premeditation. I doubt much the ſolidity of this remark, or the certainty of the fact, but however it be, there is no occaſion for it in the caſe of a miniſter, becauſe preparation and premeditation are expected from him, and in that caſe he may make his diſcourſes abundantly plain and ſimple without any affected blunders. (3) Simplicity is alſo neceſſary, as ſuited to the goſpel itſelf, the ſubject of a miniſter's diſcourſes. Nothing more humbling to the pride of man, than the doctrine of the croſs; nothing more unbecoming that doctrine, than too much finery of language. The apoſtle Paul choſe to preach "not with the words which man's wiſdom teacheth"—and again, "not with excellency of ſpeech or wiſdom," which though I admit that it does not condemn ſtudy and ſound knowledge, yet it certainly ſhows that the ſtyle of the pulpit ſhould be the moſt ſimple and ſelf-denied of any other.

3. Another qualification for a miniſter, is accuracy, from the utmoſt diligence in his important work. I place this immediately after the other, to guard it againſt abuſe by exceſs. To avoid vain affected ornaments is a very different thing from negligence in preparation. The very ſame apoſtle who ſpeaks with ſo much contempt of human wiſdom, yet greatly inſiſts in writing to Timothy and Titus, on their giving themſelves to ſtudy, to exhortation, to doctrine, "Meditate upon thoſe things," ſays he, &c.

Study and accuracy indeed is neceſſary, that a miniſter may procure and keep up the attention of his hearers. That he may inform the judgment as well as convince the conſcience. The ancient fathers have generally inſiſted upon this, as of much moment. And in our own times I obſerve that it is neceſſary to avoid offending perſons of finer taſte, who are too much attached to the outſide of things, and are immediately diſguſted with every error againſt propriety, and are apt to reproach religion itſelf, for the weakneſs or abſurdity of thoſe who ſpeak in its behalf. Let no man ſeek to avoid that reproach, which may be his lot, for preaching the truths of the everlaſting goſpel, but let him always avoid the juſt reproach of handling them in a mean, ſlovenly and indecent manner.

4. Another quality of a miniſter's eloquence ſhould be force and vehemence. I have in ſome former parts of the general ſubject, ſhown you how and when this is to be moſt exerted. The deſign of the preſent remark is to let you know, that there is no ſpeaker who has a greater right to exert himſelf to the utmoſt, or who may properly intereſt his hearers more, than a miniſter of the goſpel. No ſpeaker has ſubjects or arguments more proper for producing this effect. To conſider the ſubjects which a ſpeaker from the pulpit has to handle, one would think that it muſt be the eaſieſt thing imaginable to ſpeak from them in a powerful and intereſting manner. The eternal God—the greatneſs of his works—the univerſality of his Providence—his awful juſtice—his irreſiſtible power—his infinite mercy—and the wiſdom of God in the myſtery of redeeming grace—the condition of ſaints and ſinners while on earth—and the final deciſion of their eternal ſtate in the day of judgment. The truth is, the ſubjects are ſo very great in themſelves, that it is not poſſible to equal them by the manner of handling them. Probably for this very reaſon many fall ſhort. Diſcouraged by the immenſity of the theme, they fall below what they might have done on ſubjects leſs awful. This however ſhows, with what a holy ambition thoſe who are employed in the ſervice of Chriſt in the goſpel,

ſhould endeavor to exert themſelves in the glorious cauſe. Provided they are themſelves in earneſt, and take truth and nature as their guide, they can ſcarcely exceed in zeal and ardor for the glory of God, and the good of precious ſouls.

5. Another excellent quality of pulpit eloquence is, to be under the reſtraint of judgment and propriety. I place this after the former, as its counterpart, and neceſſary to give it proper effect. And it may be obſerved, that as religious and moral ſubjects give the fureſt and the fulleſt ſcope to zeal and fervor, ſo they need as much as any, the ſtrict government of prudence and experience. I do not mean only by this to guard miniſters from the irregular fervors of enthuſiaſm, but to give, if poſſible, a degree of ſolidity and real truth to their inſtructions. They ought to avoid all turgid declamation, to keep to experience, and take things as they really are. Let ſome people, for example, ſpeak of riches, and what ſhall you hear from them? Gold and ſilver, what are they but ſhining droſs, ſparkling metals, a thing of no real value? That in the eye of reaſon and philoſophy they are of no extenſive uſe and altogether contemptible. And indeed to take things in a certain philoſophical abſtraction, they are good for nothing. —Mere gold or ſilver you can neither eat nor wear— Their value, you will ſay, depends all upon opinion, the changeable fancy of men—But this manner of ſpeaking, and all that is related to it, ſeeming to be philoſophy and reaſon, is really abſurdity and nonſenſe. For though it be true that gold, abſtracted from the opinion of mankind, is not a whit more valuable than ſtones, and that if I was in the midſt of a foreſt ſurrounded with wild beaſts, a whole bag full of gold would do me no ſervice; yet it is as certain that in our preſent ſituation it is of that real value as to procure all the conveniences of life. The way then to treat ſuch ſubjects is not to uſe theſe rhetorical phraſes in contempt of riches, but to ſhow from experience that they are good or evil according to the temper of him that uſes them, and that we ſee diſcontent and ungoverned paſſion find as eaſy acceſs to the anti-chamber of the prince as the cottage of the poor. The ſame thing I

would ſay of fame, that it is eaſy to ſay fame is no more but idle breath, &c. but the great matter is to view thoſe things in a ſober and rational light, to give to every outward mercy its proper value, and only ſhow how much they are counter-balanced by things of infinitely greater moment.

But what I have often obſerved with moſt regret upon this ſubject is, young perſons carrying the things that are really true and excellent, to a certain exceſs or high pitch, that is beyond nature, and does not tend in the leaſt to promote conviction, but rather hinders it. When men ſpeak of virtue or true goodneſs, they are apt to raiſe the deſcription beyond the life in any real inſtance, and when they ſpeak of vice and its conſequences they are apt to draw the character ſo as it will apply only to a few of the moſt deſperate profligates, and the miſerable ſtate to which they reduce themſelves. This rather ſeems to fortify the generality of perſons, to whom theſe deſcriptions do not apply, in their careleſs and ſecure ſtate.

Once more I have often obſerved young perſons frequently chooſe as their ſubject afflictions, of which probably they have had very little experience, and ſpeak in ſuch a high ſtyle as if every good man were, as the heroes of old, above the reach of every accident. And it is true that an eminent ſaint is ſometimes made ſuperior to all his ſufferings; but generally ſpeaking, we ought to be very tender of ſufferers, till we ourſelves have been in the furnace of affliction; and after that we ſhall not need be told ſo. On the whole, a ſtrict adherence to truth and nature, and taking the world juſt as it is, will be an excellent mean to direct us in every part of our public ſervice.

6. Laſtly, a miniſter ought to have extenſive knowledge. Every thing whatever that is the object of human knowledge, may be made ſubſervient to theology. And conſidering that a miniſter is in public life, and has to do with friends and enemies of all ranks, he ought to be well furniſhed with literature of every kind. At the ſame time I would have this well underſtood, it is not neceſſary, and I think it is not deſirable, that a miniſter ſhould be quite an adept in particular branches of know-

ledge, except thoſe that are cloſely related to his proper work. The reaſon of this is, it takes more time to be a perfect maſter of ſome of the particular ſciences, than he has to ſpare from his duty, and therefore with a taſte of the ſeveral ſciences, general knowledge is moſt ſuited to his circumſtances, and moſt neceſſary to his uſefulneſs.

LECTURE XV.

I PROCEED now to the eloquence of the bar. The profeſſion of the law is of great importance in the Britiſh dominions. There is, therefore, great room for this ſort of eloquence. This, indeed, may be ſaid to be the country of law, not only on account of its being a free ſtate, the character of which is, that not man, but the laws, have dominion, which is our glory, but becauſe by the great multiplicity of our ſtatutes it becomes an important and difficult ſcience. For both theſe reaſons there are great hopes propoſed to perſons of ability in this department. They have not only the reaſonable proſpect, if of tolerable abilities with diligence, to provide an honorable ſubſiſtence to themſelves, but it is, the direct road to promotion, and the way of obtaining the higheſt offices in the ſtate.

Here as in the former particular, we muſt conſider every thing as already ſaid, that belongs to the ſubject in general; and indeed by far the greateſt number of valuable books on the ſubject of eloquence having been drawn up by pleaders at the bar, they muſt be at leaſt as much or perhaps more directly applicable to this ſpecies as any other. I cannot help however, taking notice of a prepoſterous practice in this country, of ſome who take their children from literature, before they have finiſhed there courſe, becauſe they intend to put them to the law. This muſt be voluntarily confining them to the very loweſt ſort of practice in that profeſſion, for if any whatever ſtand in need of literature, it muſt be the lawyers. Suppoſing therefore all that has been ſaid of compoſition, and ſpeaking in

general, there are a few particular characters of moſt importance in men of that claſs.

1. Probity or real untainted integrity. There can be no doubt that integrity is the firſt and moſt important character of a man, be his profeſſion what it will; but I have mentioned it here becauſe there are many not ſo ſenſible of the importance of it in the profeſſion of the law, and think it is neceſſary to make a good man, but not a good lawyer. On the contrary, I am perſuaded not only that a man loſes nothing in any capacity by his integrity, but that a lawyer ſhould in general ſtudy by probity and real worth to obtain reſpect from the public, and to give weight to every thing he ſays. This integrity ſhould ſhow itſelf in undertaking cauſes. There are many that think there is no ground of ſcruple in this reſpect, and ſometimes they are found to boaſt with what addreſs they conducted, and with what ſucceſs they carried through a very weak cauſe. I apprehend this is truly diſhonorable, and as there are plenty of cauſes in which the equity is doubtful, every one who ſhould make it a point of honor not to undertake a cauſe which they knew not to be juſt, it would give unſpeakable influence to his management and pleadings. The ſame probity ſhould appear in the manner of conducting cauſes. No ſiniſter arts, no equivocation or concealment of the truth. Perhaps ſome may think that thoſe who ſhould be conſcience bound in this manner, would give roguiſh perſons an evident advantage over them, but it is a great miſtake. Let them uſe but prudence and firmneſs joined with integrity, and they are an over match for all the villains upon earth. The common proverb is certainly juſt, "Ho-"neſty is the beſt policy." The arts of chicanery can only ſucceed once or twice. As ſoon as a man gets the reputation of cunning, its effect is over, for nobody will truſt him, and every body counter-works him.

2. Another excellent quality for a lawyer is aſſiduity and method in buſineſs. This is of great advantage to the very beſt genius. I the rather inſiſt upon it, that there prevails often a ſuppoſition that it is not the quality of a great man. Becauſe there are ſome perſons of very

middling abilities, who give great application, and are lovers of order, therefore ſome are pleaſed to call thoſe dull plodding fellows, and think it is a mark of fire and vivacity to be irregular both in their buſineſs and in their lives. There are alſo ſome few men of real and great capacity, who are negligent and even looſe in their practice, who riſe by the mere force of ſingular parts. Theſe are an unhappy example to thoſe ſuperficial creatures, who think by imitating them in their folly, that they will become as great geniuſes as they. But ſuffer me to obſerve to you, that the greateſt geniuſes here have been remarkable for the moſt vigorous application, and the greateſt men have been and are remarkable for order and method in every thing they do. There is a certain dignity which ariſes from a man's word being ſacred, even in keeping an appointment, or the moſt trifling circumſtance; and for people of buſineſs, order and punctuality gives ſo much eaſe to themſelves, and pleaſure to all who have to do with them, that it is a wonder there ſhould be any body that does not ſtudy it. Is there any genius, think you, in throwing down a thing ſo unthinkingly, that you do not know how to take it up again? The great archbiſhop of Cambray looks upon it as one of the moſt important things to teach young perſons, to put every thing in its proper place. As every thing that belongs to furniture, dreſs, books, and implements, muſt be in ſome place, they are always beſt diſpoſed when each is in its own place. They will give leaſt diſturbance there when they are not uſed, and they will be moſt readily found, when they ought to be uſed.

But when we come to looſe and vicious practices, it is truly entertaining to meet with riotous diſorderly fellows, who are pleaſed to ſpeak with contempt of thoſe who love form and good order, as if they themſelves were men of great acuteneſs. Now I almoſt never knew an example of your miſchief-workers, but they were thick ſculls. I have known ſome, who could neither write a jeſt nor ſpeak a jeſt in all their life, but had tricks enough they could play, to diſturb a ſober neighbourhood. I have thus been led back to the irregularities of youth

from ſpeaking of method in buſineſs, as of importance to lawyers. I ſhall conclude the obſervation with ſaying, that there is no great proſpect of a man's ever being lord chancellor, who ſpends his time in ſcouring the ſtreets and beating the watch, when he is at the inns of court.

3. Another quality uſeful to a lawyer is addreſs, and delicacy in his manners and deportment in general, and the conduct of his buſineſs in particular, and above all in pleading and public ſpeaking. The addreſs and delicacy I mean, are ſuch as are acquired by the knowledge of human nature, and ſome acquaintance with human life. They are uſeful I admit, for every public ſpeaker, but if I am not miſtaken, much more needful to the lawyer than the clergyman. The clergyman proceeds upon things of acknowledged moment, a certain dignity of character is allowed him, and expected from him. A pretended delicacy is ſometimes offenſive in him. A certain firmneſs, not to call it boldneſs, and impartiality in adminiſtering inſtruction and reproof, are ornaments in him. But a lawyer muſt always conſider the propriety of time and place—What belongs to him that ſpeaks, or to him or them that are ſpoken to, or that are ſpoken of. There are ſome fine examples of addreſs and delicacy in Cicero, particularly in his oration pro Roſcio,—pro Milone—et de lege agraria.

4. A fourth quality neceſſary for a lawyer, is extenſive knowledge in the arts and ſciences, in hiſtory and in the laws. A perſon that means to riſe, or attain to ſome of the higheſt degrees of this profeſſion, muſt ſtrive to accompliſh himſelf by knowledge in the arts and ſciences. His buſineſs is of a public kind, the cauſes he may have occaſion to treat, are exceedingly various. What adverſaries he may meet with he is altogether uncertain. I do not mean that a lawyer need to be an adept in particular branches of ſcience, but the principles of knowledge in general are very neceſſary, otherwiſe he will frequently expoſe himſelf. Groſs ignorance in the ſciences will lay him open to blunders in language, which he could not otherwiſe avoid. Hiſtory alſo is a branch of literature that a lawyer ſhould make his favorite ſtudy, as his

buſineſs lies in canvaſſing the various relations of men in ſocial life, he will be beſt able to reaſon on the meaning and propriety of laws and their application, if he be well acquainted with hiſtory, which points out the ſtate of ſociety, and human affairs in every age. As to knowledge of the laws, this is what lawyers cannot do without, and what therefore they do neceſſarily ſtudy, but it would be much to their advantage if they would add to the knowledge of the municipal laws of their own country, a knowledge of the great principles of equity, and of natural and political law, as applied in general.

5. The laſt quality I ſhall mention as of uſe to a lawyer, is quickneſs and vivacity. It is of uſe to him to have an acuteneſs and penetration to obſerve the turns of a cauſe. To detect the plots and fallacy of adverſaries, as well as to anſwer upon the ſpot, whatever may be thrown up. I am ſenſible that this of quickneſs is entirely a natural quality, and cannot be learned; but I thought it beſt to obſerve it, becauſe it is of more uſe to a lawyer than to moſt other men. A miniſter is only called to ſpeak what he has deliberately prepared, and fully digeſted, but a lawyer quite incapable of extemporary productions, would not do ſo well. It is alſo certain, that wit, which is intolerable in the pulpit, is often not barely pardonable in a lawyer, but very uſeful. There is however, ſuch a difference in the capacity of men, that one may be eminent in one branch, and defective in another. A man of coolneſs, penetration and application is often eminent in chamber councils, and one of vivacity, paſſion and elocution, eminent in pleading cauſes, eſpecially in criminal courts.

The third and laſt diviſion of this claſs, is the eloquence of promiſcuous deliberative aſſemblies. I ſhall not be very long upon this ſubject, but as it is far from being improbable that ſome here preſent may in future life have occaſion to act in that ſphere, and to be members of the provincial aſſemblies, I ſhall make a few remarks upon it to that purpoſe. In large deliberative aſſemblies of the political kind, there is nearly as much opportunity

for fervor and paſſion, as there is to the divine, and more ſcope for wit and humor, than to the lawyer. For though no matters of a merely temporal kind, are of equal moment in themſelves, with the things a miniſter has to treat of, yet men's paſſions are almoſt as much, and in many caſes more excited and intereſted by them. The fate of nations, the welfare of our country, liberty or ſervitude, may often ſeem to want as violent an exertion of the paſſionate kind of eloquence, as any ſubject whatever.

It is worth while to obſerve, that ſeveral writers, in ſpeaking of the ancient and modern eloquence, have taken it for granted, that the circumſtances of things are changed; that the violent paſſionate eloquence that prevailed in Greece and Rome, would not do in modern times. They will tell you, that in a modern ſenate, or other deliberative aſſembly, people come all prepared by private intereſt, and will vote juſt as they are engaged, without regard to either eloquence or truth; but ſome very able writers have delivered a contrary opinion, particularly David Hume, who though an infidel in opinion, is of great reach and accuracy of judgment in matters of criticiſm. He has ſaid that human nature is always the ſame, and that the eloquence which kindles and governs the paſſions, will always have great influence in large aſſemblies, let them be of what ſtation or rank ſoever. I apprehend, that experience, ſince his writing the above, has fully juſtified it by two ſignal examples: one in the ſtate, and the other in the church. Mr. Pitt, now Earl of Chatham, from being a colonel of dragoons, roſe to the higheſt ſtation in the Britiſh Empire, merely by the power of a warm and paſſionate eloquence; there was never any thing in his diſcourſes, that are remarkable either for ſtrength of reaſoning, or purity and elegance of ſtyle; but a very great impetuoſity and fire, that carried his point in the Britiſh houſe of commons. The other inſtance is the late Mr. Whitfield, who acquired and preſerved a degree of popularity, to which, the preſent age never ſaw any thing that could be compared; the happy ends that were promoted by this in providence, I omit, as a ſubject of a different nature; but the immediate and ſecond cauſes that produced

it were a power of elocution, and natural talents for public ſpeaking, ſuperior by far to any, that ever I ſaw poſſeſſed by any man on earth.

To ſucceed in ſpeaking in public deliberative aſſemblies, the following are the moſt important qualities: (1) Dignity of character and diſintereſtedneſs. In public deliberations, it is not eaſy to procure attention, unleſs there is ſome degree of character preſerved; and indeed, wherever there is a high opinion of the candor and ſincerity of the ſpeaker, it will give an inconceivable weight to his ſentiments in debate.

(2) There is a neceſſity of knowledge of the moſt liberal kind, that is, the knowledge of men and manners, of hiſtory, and of human nature. The moſt ſucceſsful ſpeakers in ſenates, are generally thoſe who know mankind beſt; and if a man would uniformly preſerve his character and influence in this light, he muſt addict himſelf to the ſtudy of hiſtory, and the exerciſe of reflection.

(3) To this ſort of eloquence is particularly neceſſary, a power over the paſſions. This is one of the moſt important characters of eloquence in general; yet it is more peculiarly neceſſary, and more eminently powerful in promiſcuous deliberative aſſemblies than in any other. In religious diſcourſes, the effect is expected to be cool, deep and permanent. Even preachers in ſingle diſcourſes, rather chooſe to ſpeak as writers, than as pleaders; and lawyers, except in ſome few inſtances, may expect to have their aſſertions taken to pieces, canvaſſed and tried one after another; but in meetings of the political kind, the deciſion is to be by a vote, before the diſſolution of the aſſembly, and cannot be altered afterwards though the majority ſhould change their ſentiments. In theſe aſſemblies therefore, to be ſure, a power over the paſſions muſt be of the utmoſt moment.

I ſhall conclude this particular by two ſubordinate remarks on the ſame ſubject. (1) That to ſucceed in ſpeaking in ſenates or large aſſemblies, there is much need of great diſcernment, both to proportionate men's attempts to their capacity, and to chooſe the proper time for exerting it. When information is demanded, any perſon

who can give it, will be heard with patience upon it: but on ſubjects of high political importance, where there are many eminent champions on each ſide, even perſons of moderate abilities would run a riſk of being affronted. (2) The other direction is, that all who intend to be ſpeakers in political aſſemblies, muſt begin early; if they delay beginning till years ſhall add maturity to their judgment, and weight to their authority, the conſequence will be, that years will add ſo much to their caution and diffidence, that they will never begin at all.

We come now to conſider the ſtructure of a particular diſcourſe—the order, proportion and mutual relation of the ſeveral parts. Orators, or critics on oratory very early learned to analyſe a diſcourſe, and to enumerate the parts of which it is compoſed. They are a little differently ſtated by different authors; ſome reckon four, introduction, propoſition, confirmation and concluſion; others, five, adding narration; others, ſix, adding refutation; and there are ſome diſcourſes in which you may eaſily have each of theſe different things; but conſidering that we muſt take this matter ſo generally, as to include all kinds of compoſition, it would be I think as well to adopt the diviſion in poetical criticiſm, and ſay that every regular diſcourſe or compoſition of every kind, muſt have a beginning, a middle, and an end. Every performance, however ſhort, muſt be capable of ſome ſuch diviſion, otherwiſe it is called abrupt and irregular. The reaſon why I would make the diviſion in this manner is, that the beginning is properly the introduction; the middle includes every thing however various, that is taken into the body of a diſcourſe; now theſe may be very many, propoſition, narration, explication, confirmation, illuſtration and refutation; but theſe are not all requiſite in every diſcourſe, and are to be introduced in propoſitions variable and accidental, according to the nature of every particular ſubject.

Let us ſpeak firſt of the introduction—This is the more neceſſary, that it is of very conſiderable importance, eſpecially to an orator; it is alſo difficult, at leaſt ſpeakers have generally ſaid ſo. We find it ſaid in ſome of the

books of oratory, that the introduction though firſt pronounced, ought to be laſt compoſed—that it comes to be conſidered after the diſcourſe is finiſhed; but this does not appear to me to be either natural or neceſſary, except in a qualified ſenſe; the introduction is commonly ſettled after the ſubject is pitched upon, the diſtribution planned and digeſted, and ſuch reflection upon the whole as precedes writing.

The ends in an introduction, are ſaid by Cicero to be theſe, Reddere auditorem attentum, benevolum et docilem; to make the reader attentive to the diſcourſe, favorable to the ſpeaker, and willing to receive inſtruction upon the ſubject. Theſe different views may not only be altered in their order, at the judgment of the orator, but any of them may be left out when it is unneceſſary; if, for example, I have no reaſon to ſuſpect diſaffection in any of my hearers, long apologies, eſpecially if any way perſonal, are rather diſguſting.

The ways of procuring either attention, a favor, or making the hearers teachable, are ſo various, that they can neither be enumerated nor claſſed. In this, the orator muſt exerciſe his invention, judgment and good taſte. The moſt uſual manner of introduction, is a common place upon the importance of the ſubject; the introductions drawn from the circumſtances of time, place and perſon, are generally the moſt ſtriking; ſometimes an unuſual ſtroke is happy in an introduction, as alſo a weighty reflection or bold ſentiment on the ſubject itſelf. A funeral ſermon was happily begun by Mr. Baxter, in this manner; "Death is the occaſion of our preſent meeting, and death ſhall be the ſubject of the following diſcourſe; I am to ſpeak of that which ſhall ſhortly ſilence me, and you are to hear of that which ſhall ſpeedily ſtop your ears." Dr. Evans begins a ſermon on Eccleſ. xii. 10. "Rejoice O young man," &c. by telling a ſtory of a ſoldier whoſe life was ſaved by a bible in his pocket, and his converſion produced by the accident; the bible ſaved him from being ſhot through with a bullet, and when he examined, it had juſt pierced the leaves through, till it ſtopped at that paſſage, which no doubt he read

with particular emotions. A diſcourſe of a lawyer in a law-ſuit, is generally beſt begun by a narrative of the occaſion of the quarrel, and the introducing of any common-place topics would be reckoned affectation. A clergyman may often have an introduction to his ſubject with advantage, and may alſo often begin, by a conciſe view of the context, or the occaſion of the words he has choſen to diſcourſe upon.

Perhaps what will be of moſt uſe here, will be to point out ſeveral ways by which an introduction may be faulty; of theſe I ſhall mention the following.

1. An introduction may be faulty, by being too pompous and extravagant. This is one of the moſt common faults in the prefaces or introductions to books. When an author is to write upon any ſubject, he thinks it neceſſary to ſhow, not only that his ſubject is worth the handling, but that it is better than all other ſubjects. Weak and pedantic writers are often guilty of this to a degree that is ridiculous. A treatiſe on arithmetic, ſometimes is introduced by a pompous proof that the knowledge of numbers is either ſuperior to, or the baſis of all other knowledge; the ſame thing is done with grammar; and there is often a general truth or plauſibility from which the ridicule to which they expoſe themſelves, takes its riſe; for to be ſure, number is every where; every thing that ever was or can be, muſt be either one or more. As to grammar, all good ſenſe muſt certainly be grammar; yet there are ſometimes perſons who would be thought to underſtand both theſe ſubjects very well, who could not ſpeak five ſentences, or write a letter without being deſervedly laughed at.

2. An introduction may be faulty, by being general. We ſee often reflections in the introduction to a diſcourſe, that would be juſt as proper for one ſubject, as for another. Such ſentiments may be ſaid to go before, but they cannot be ſaid to introduce their ſubject. Sometimes you will hear the introduction almoſt out, before you can conjecture what is to be the ſubject; and ſome are ſo unhappy in the choice of introductory ſentiments, that you would think they intend ſomething that is very different from what really appears in the piece itſelf.

3. It is a fault in an introduction, to be filled with remarks quite beaten and hackneyed, if I may ſpeak ſo. Theſe may have been very good remarks or ſentiments when firſt conceived and uttered; but by perpetual repetition have loſt their force, and from the very commonneſs appear mean and deſpicable. They are many of them founded upon ſayings in the claſſic authors, and in the paſt age were commonly produced as quotations, with their paraphraſe, ſuch as "omne tulit punctum qui miſcuit utile dulci." "Ingratum ſi dixeris, omnia dixeris."

4. An introduction may be forced and unnatural; that is to ſay, ſuch remarks may be made as it requires a great deal of pains to ſhow any relation between them and the ſubject to be treated.

5. It may be fanciful or whimſical. There was an age when theſe ſort of introductions were to the taſte of the public. This fancy or whim, or as I may call it, a finical way of entering upon a ſubject publicly, may be beſt illuſtrated by an example. An author of the laſt age begins a diſcourſe upon ch. viii, of the Epiſtle to the Romans, v. 28, to this purpoſe: The Scriptures may be conſidered as a large and rich garden.—The New Teſtament is the moſt valuable diviſion of that garden—The Epiſtle to the Romans is the richeſt compartment of that diviſion; the 8th chap. is the moſt delightful border of that compartment, and the 28th verſe the fineſt flower of that border.

6. An introduction may be faulty by being tedious. An introduction is deſigned to whet the attention, and excite impatience for what is to follow. But when it is very long, it not only diſguſts by the diſappointment, but waſtes that attention which ſhould be preſerved in full vigor, or raiſes a high expectation, which is probably for that reaſon diſappointed.

As to the middle or body of a diſcourſe, the chief thing to be attended to in this place is, to make you ſenſible of what it conſiſts. The former diſcourſes have all been intended to teach you the way of compoſition, both as to materials and ſtructure; yet as to the method of conducting a particular diſcourſe, I would make the three following remarks: (1.) Be careful of the order of the ſeveral parti-

culars mentioned. You may not see it proper to introduce all in the compass of a single discourse, but so far as they are introduced, they should be in the following order: Proposition, narration, illustration, confirmation, refutation. You will speedily perceive this to be the order of nature, to lay down the method, narrate the facts, illustrate them by whatever may have that effect, adduce the proofs, resolve objections. A person of a clear head will range his sentiments in this order—yet there are some exceptions to be admitted. Sometimes it is useful in a cause to reserve a part of the story itself, to apply or illustrate an argument—and in some few instances it is best to answer objections, or remove prejudices, before you adduce your proofs.

(2.) It is a most useful direction to the greatest part of writers and speakers, to guard against introducing every thing that they might say, or being so formal that they will say something in the way of form in every one of their divisions. This analysis of a discourse is good for making the judgment clear; but if it be applied merely to make the invention copious, it will probably produce an unnecessary load. Some people will needs answer objections on any subject, and frequently teach their hearers to make objections which they never would have thought of.

(3.) Learn to keep close to a subject, and bring in nothing but what is truly of force, to the point to be proved. I the rather mention this as a rule for the middle or body of a discourse, because the most are there apt to transgress it. In the introduction and the conclusion, every one but those who are perfectly stupid, keep their subject directly in their eye; whereas in the body, when they are entered upon argument and amplification, they are apt to be led astray, and either to fall into what may be called absolute digressions, or at least to lengthen some parts more than true proportion requires.

As to the conclusion or peroration, to this may be applied particularly all that was said upon pathos, or raising the passions, to which I add the following short observations:

(1.) The conclusion should be by far the warmest and most animated part of the discourse. It is not, I think,

deſireable to attempt to raiſe the paſſions of an audience high, till towards the cloſe of a diſcourſe, becauſe, if it be begun ſooner, there is an evident hazard of not being able to preſerve them in the ſame pitch till the end.

(2.) The concluſion ſhould collect into one point of view, by ſome well choſen expreſſions, the force of what has gone before, and the greateſt ſkill in the ſpeaker is ſhown by concentrating the whole in this manner. Before the illuſtration it could not be ſaid ſo briefly; but by the help of what went before, it may be recalled to memory in leſs room.

(3.) Towards the concluſion the ſentences ſhould be ſtudied, the tone of voice higher, and the pronunciation more rapid than towards the beginning.

(4.) Laſtly, great care ſhould be taken in moral diſcourſes to have no far-fetched inferences.

LECTURE XVI.

I AM now to conclude the diſcourſes upon this ſubject by an inquiry into the general principles of taſte and criticiſm. In the former diſcourſes we have kept cloſe to the arts of writing and ſpeaking, and have attempted to deſcribe the various kinds of compoſition, their characters, diſtinctions, beauties, blemiſhes, the means of attaining ſkill in them, and the uſes to which they ſhould be applied. But is it not proper to conſider the alliance, if there be any ſuch, between this and other arts? This will ſerve greatly to improve and perfect our judgment and taſte. It was very early obſerved, that there was a relation between the different arts, and ſome common principles that determine their excellence. Cicero mentions this in the introduction of his oration for Archias the poet. Etenim omnes artes quæ ad humanitatem pertinent, habent quoddam commune vinculum, et quaſi cognatione quadam inter ſe continentur.

Theſe arts, which Cicero ſays, Ad humanitatem pertinent, are called by the moderns the fine arts. This is to diſtinguiſh them from thoſe commonly called the mechanic arts, making the utenſils and conveniences of com-

mon life. And yet even these may be included, as taste and elegance, or the want of it may plainly be discerned in every production of human skill. However, those called the fine arts are the following: Poetry, oratory, music, painting, sculpture, architecture. It must be allowed that, though these arts have some common principles of excellence, there are some persons who have a strong inclination after, and even a capacity of performing in some of them, and not in others. There are good orators who are no musicians, or perhaps who have very little taste for the beauties of architecture. Yet commonly complete critics, and those who have a well formed taste, are able to perceive the beauty of the whole, and the relation of one to another. It is remarkable that the expressions in composition are frequently borrowed from one art and applied to another. We say a smooth, polished style, as well as a polished surface; and we say a building is sweet or elegant, as well as an oration. We say the notes in music are bold and swelling, or warm and animated.

One of our modern authors on eloquence, has thought fit to take exception at the use of the word *taste*, as being of late invention, and as implying nothing but what is carried in judgment and genius. But I apprehend that the application of it, though it should be admitted to be modern, is perfectly just. It came to us from the French. The *bon gout* among them was applied first to classic elegance, and from thence to all the other arts. And as a sense of the beauty of the arts is certainly a thing often distinct from judgment, as well as from erudition; the term seems not only to be allowable, but well chosen. We find persons who can reason very strongly upon many subjects, who yet are incapable of elegance in composition, and indeed of receiving much delight from the other fine arts. Nay, we find persons of uncommon acuteness in mathematics and natural philosophy, who yet are incapable of attaining to a fine taste.

It has been sometimes said, that taste is arbitrary.—Some will have it, that there is no such thing as a standard of taste, or any method of improving it. It is a kind of common proverb with many, that there is no disputing

about taſte. That it is of this intellectual as of natural taſte, according as the palate or organs are differently formed, what gives an agreeable reliſh to one, gives a diſagreeable one to another. They ſay that the modes of taſte are temporary and variable—that different nations, climates, governments, and ages, have different ways of ſpeaking and writing, and a different turn in all the arts —that chance or particular perſons will be able to give a turn to the mode in all theſe. Even ſo great a man as Dr. Warburton has embraced this ſentiment, and to thoſe who attack the Scriptures as not being a complete model of eloquence he anſwers there is no fixed ſtandard of eloquence. That eloquence is one thing in Arabia, another in Greece, and another in England, for this reaſon he condemns thoſe who after the example of Mr. Blackwall in his ſacred claſſics, vindicates the Scriptures from objections of this kind, or produce inſtances of their ſublimity and beauty. But though I have ſhown you in ſome of the former diſcourſes, that the ſtyle and manner in vogue will receive ſome tincture, and be liable to ſome variation, from all the particulars mentioned, yet there is certainly a real beauty or deformity in nature, independent of theſe partial changes, which, when properly explained and examples of it exhibited, will obtain more univerſal approbation, and retain it longer than the others. The poetry and oratory of the ancients and their painting and ſtatuary, are inſtances and proofs of this. It may alſo appear from what I mentioned to you formerly, that thoſe compoſitions which have moſt ſimplicity and ſuch excellencies as are moſt ſolid, with feweſt of the caſual ornaments of faſhion, and the peculiarities of their own age will pleaſe, when their contemporaries are loſt in oblivion. The ſame thing holds with pieces of furniture that are elegant but plain. Such have the beauties of nature, which belong to every age. But to ſhow this more fully, even the remarks upon natural taſte are not true in ſuch a ſenſe as to weaken what has been ſaid. For though it is certain that perſons uſed to the coarſeſt kind of food which they have often eaten with reliſh, may ſhow at firſt an averſion to the delicacies of cookery, yet after a perſon has been a little accuſtomed to that kind of preparation of victuals in

which regard is had to the mixtures that are moſt proper to gratify the palate, he will not eaſily return to his flovenly proviſion. But though there were leſs in this remark, it ſeems plain that there is a taſte in the fine arts, and a real foundation for it in nature.

But ſuppoſing that there is a foundation in nature for taſte and criticiſm, there is another queſtion that ariſes, viz. Can we tell what it is? Can we reach the original principles which govern this matter? Can we ſay not only that ſuch and ſuch things pleaſe us, but why they do ſo? Can we go any further than we have already done, as to compoſition? Some have refuſed that we can with certainty reach the ſource of this ſubject. When the cauſe is aſked, why one perſon, one thing, or one compoſition is more excellent than another, they ſay it is an immediate and ſimple perception, a je ne ſcais quoi, as the French ſay, which phraſe ſeems to have taken its riſe from the circumſtance which often occurs, that in a houſe, a garden, a ſtatue or painting, or even in a perſon's countenance and carriage, you perceive ſomething agreeable upon the whole, and yet cannot ſuddenly tell wherein it lies, the parts are not better proportioned perhaps, nor the features better formed than in another, and yet there is ſomething in the compoſition of the whole that gives the moſt exquiſite delight.

Others however, and the far greateſt number, have thought it proper to go a great deal further, and to inquire into human nature, its perceptions and powers, and endeavor to trace out the principles of taſte, which apply in general to all the fine arts, or in greater or leſs proportion to each of them, for ſome apply more to one than to others. As for example, if the ſenſe of harmony is an original perception, it applies chiefly to muſic, and remotely to the pronunciation of an orator, and ſtill more remotely to the compoſition of an orator. Theſe powers or perceptions in human nature have been generally called the powers of imagination. Mr. Hutchinſon calls them reflex ſenſes, finer internal ſenſations; and upon examination we ſhall find that beſides the internal ſenſes, there are certain finer perceptions, which we are capable of, which may be ſaid to take their riſe from out-

ward objects, and to suppose the external sensation, but yet to be additions to, and truly distinct from it. As for example, I see a beautiful person. My eye immediately perceives colour, and shape variously disposed; but I have further a sense of beauty in the whole. I hear the sound of musical instruments; my ear receives the noise; every body's ear who is not deaf does the same. If I have a sense of harmony I take a pleasure in the composition of the sounds. The way to examine the principles of taste is to consider which of these perceptions are simple, immediate, and original; which of them are dependant upon others, and how they may be combined and compounded, and afford delight by such composition.

This is an extensive subject, and it is difficult to treat it concisely, and yet plainly; and indeed after all the pains I can take, there will be reason to apprehend some obscurity will remain to persons not used to such kind of disquisitions. The way I shall take is to state to you critically or historically the way in which this matter hath been treated by some of the most celebrated writers. The Spectator, written by Mr. Addison, on the pleasures of the imagination, reduces the sources of delight or approbation to three great classes, novelty, greatness, and beauty. He says, that such is our desire after novelty, that all things that were before unknown, are from this circumstance recommended to us, and that we receive a delight in the discovery and contemplation of what we never saw before, except such objects as are painful to the organs of sight. That children run from one play thing to another, not because it is better, but new; that it is the same case with men, and that authors in particular are at great pains to have something new and striking in their manner, which is the more difficult to be attained that they must make use of known words, and that their ideas too must be such as are easily intelligible. There is something here that would require a good deal of explication. I do not think that any object is, properly speaking, painful to the organs of sight, except too much light; but we do not consider this as a fault in the object, but feel it as a weakness in ourselves. And further, if there be such a

thing as beauty, one would think that if beauty be agreeable it muſt have a contrary, which is uglineſs, and that muſt be diſagreeable. As to greatneſs, this has been always conſidered as a ſource of admiration. The moſt ancient critics obſerve, that we do not admire a ſmall rivulet, but the Danube, the Nile, the ocean. This I will afterwards conſider. As to beauty, it has been conſidered as of all other things moſt inconceivable, and therefore made a firſt and immediate perception.

Others have taken beauty and grace as the general terms, including every thing that pleaſes us. Thus we ſay a a beautiful poem, ſtatue, landſcape. Thus alſo we ſay a ſublime and beautiful ſentiment. Thus they have taken in under it novelty and greatneſs, and every other agreeable quality. Many eminent critics have acted in this manner, particularly the ancients. Longinus, on the Sublime, introduces ſeveral things which do not belong to it, as diſtinguiſhed from beauty. Taking beauty as the general object of approbation or ſource of delight, and as applicable to all the fine arts, it has been variouſly analyſed.

A French writer, Crouſaz, Traité du Beau, analyſes beauty under the following principles: Variety, unity, regularity, order, proportion. Variety is the firſt. This ſeems to be related to, or perhaps in ſome reſpects the ſame with novelty, which was formerly mentioned. It is certain that a dead uniformity cannot produce beauty in any ſort of performance, poem, oration, ſtatue, picture, building. Unity is, as it were, the bound and reſtraint of variety. Things muſt be connected as well as various, and if they are not connected, the variety is nothing but confuſion. Regularity is the ſimilarity of the correſpondent parts; order is the eaſy gradation from one to another, and proportion is the ſuitableneſs of each part to the whole, and to every other part. I think it cannot be denied, that all theſe have their influence in producing beauty.

One of the moſt celebrated pieces upon this ſubject is the famous painter Hogarth's Analyſis of Beauty. He firſt produced his ſyſtem in a ſort of enigma, drawing one curved line, with the title of the line of beauty, and another with a double wave, which he called the line of grace.

He afterwards publiſhed his Analyſis of Beauty, which he reſolves into the following principles: Fitneſs, variety, uniformity, ſimplicity, intricacy and quantity. The firſt principle is fitneſs, under which he ſhows that we always conceive of a thing as intended for ſome uſe, and therefore there muſt be a correſpondence or ſuitableneſs to the uſe, otherwiſe whatever be its appearance, we reject it as not beautiful. He inſtances in ſailors, who whenever there is a ſhip that ſails well, they call her a beauty. The ſame thing will apply perfectly to all kinds of writing: for whatever fine ſentiments and noble expreſſion be in any compoſition, if they are not ſuited to the ſeaſon and ſubject, we ſay with Horace, Sed nunc non erat his locus. Variety and uniformity muſt be compounded together, and as he has made no mention of order and proportion, it is to be ſuppoſed that by variety he meant that which changes in a gradual and inſenſible manner; for variety without order is undiſtinguiſhable, and a heap of confuſion. Simplicity means that which is eaſy, and which the eye travels over and examines without difficulty; and intricacy is that which requires ſome exerciſe and attention to follow it; theſe two muſt limit one another. In repreſenting beauty as a viſible figure, he obſerves, that a ſtraight line has the leaſt beauty; that which has a wave or eaſy declination one way begins to be beautiful; that which has a double wave has ſtill greater grace. The truth is, if theſe two things do not deſtroy the one the other, ſimplicity and intricacy improve and beautify one another. Mr. Hogarth obſerves, that ringlets of hair waving in the wind have been an expreſſion of grace and elegance in every age, nation and language; which is juſt a contraſted wave, firſt, that of the curls, and this again rendered a little more intricate by the motion of the breeze. If one would have a view of this principle as exhibited in a ſingle kind, let him look at the flouriſhes with which the maſters of the pen adorn their pieces, and he will ſee that if they are eaſy and gradual in their flexions, and juſt as intricate as the eye can follow without confuſion, any thing leſs than that is leſs beautiful, and any thing more deſtroys the beauty by diſorder. I might ſhow you how this principle applies to all the arts, but ſhall only mention

compoſition, where the ſimplicity muſt be combined with refinement, and when the combination is juſt, there reſults the moſt perfect elegance. Mr. Hogarth adds quantity; that a thing having the other qualities, pleaſes in proportion as it is great; as we ſay, a magnificent building, where the proportions are truly obſerved, but every part is large.

I have only to obſerve, that Mr. Hogarth has very well illuſtrated the principles of beauty, but at the ſame time he ſeems to have introduced two, which belong to other ſources of delight, viz. fitneſs and quantity, as will be ſhown afterwards.

It is to be obſerved, that in the enumeration of the principles of beauty, there are to be found in ſome authors things not only different but oppoſite. A French author, not many years ago, to the principles mentioned by others, adds ſtrength, which he illuſtrates in this manner. He conſiders it as a principle of grace and beauty in motion, and ſays that every thing that we do with great difficulty, and that ſeems to require our utmoſt effort, is ſeen with uneaſineſs, and not with pleaſure. For this reaſon he ſays the motions of young people in general are more graceful than thoſe of old, and agreeably to this we join the word *eaſe* to gracefulneſs as explicatory—a graceful, eaſy carriage. With this explication it ſeems abundantly proper to admit the remark. On the other hand, there are ſome who have made comparative weakneſs a principle of beauty, and ſay that the more light and ſlender any thing is, unleſs it be remarkably weak, it is the more beautiful, and that things remarkably ſtrong rather belong to another claſs. Thus we ſay, a fine, tender, delicate ſhape—and on the contrary we ſay, a ſtrong, coarſe, robuſt make—a ſtrong, courſe, maſculine woman. Perhaps we may reconcile theſe two, and ſay they are both principles, becauſe there ſhould be juſt as much of each as is ſuitable to the thing in queſtion, that a perſon may have either too ſtrong or too weak a frame, for being eſteemed beautiful—that a pillar or dome may be too delicate to be durable, or too ſtrong and bulky to be elegant.

Again: many writers as you have ſeen, make greatneſs a principle of beauty; yet there are others who make littleneſs one of the conſtituents of beauty. Thoſe who do

ſo, tell us that *little* is a term of endearment, in every nation and language yet known; that it is the language of the vulgar, and therefore the undeſigned expreſſion of nature. They inſtance the diminutive appellations which are always uſed in fondling—filiolus, filiola, have more affection, than filius and filia—my dear little creature—it is a pretty little thing. To enumerate theſe different appearances, ſome, particularly Burke on the Sublime, affirms that the ideas of ſublimity and beauty are ideas of a claſs radically different; that the firſt, ſublimity, ultimately ariſes from the paſſion of terror, and the other from that of love and delight; he with a good deal of ingenuity reſolves all the ſources of the ſublime, into what is either terrible, or allied to this paſſion, exciting it either immediately in ſome degree, or by aſſociation. It is however uncertain, whether we ſhould reduce what we receive ſo much delight from, to a paſſion, which in itſelf, or in its purity, ſo to ſpeak, is painful: this objection he endeavors to remove, by ſhewing that the exerciſe of all our paſſions in a moderate degree, is a ſource of pleaſure; but perhaps, we may diſtinguiſh the ideas of ſublime and beautiful, without having recourſe to the paſſion of terror at all, by ſaying that there is an affection ſuited to the greatneſs of objects, without conſidering them as terrible, and that is, veneration: nay, perhaps we may go a little further, and ſay, that veneration is the affection truly correſpondent to greatneſs, in innocent creatures, which becomes terror in the guilty. I cannot go through the particulars of Burke's theory. He ſeems rightly to divide the ideas of ſublime and beautiful; by the union of which, ſome have made one thing, others directly its contrary to belong to beauty. One thing remarkable in Burke's Eſſay is, that he denies proportion to be any of the cauſes of beauty, which yet almoſt every other writer, has enumerated among them; and what he ſays of the infinitely various proportion in plants and animals, ſeems to be much in ſupport of his opinion: yet in works of art, proportion ſeems of much moment, and it is difficult to ſay to what ſource to refer it. I view a building, and if the parts are not in a regular proportion, it offends my eye, even though I could ſuppoſe that the diſproportion was voluntary, in order to obtain ſome great convenience.

I ſhould be inclined to think, that there are a conſiderable number of ſimple principles or internal ſenſations, that contribute each its part, in forming our taſte, and are capable of being variouſly combined, and by this combination are apt to be confounded one with another. One of the moſt diſtinct and complete enumerations, we have in Gerard's Eſſay on Taſte, and is as follows; A ſenſe of novelty, ſublimity, beauty, imitation, harmony, ridicule and virtue. I cannot go through all theſe in order, but ſhall make a few remarks, and ſhow where the diviſion is juſt or defective. His diſtinguiſhing all theſe from one another, is certainly juſt; but there are ſome things that he introduces under wrong heads; fitneſs, for example, he introduces under the head of beauty; and this ſeems rather a ſource of approbation diſtinct in itſelf, as alſo proportion, if that is not included in fitneſs. Perhaps a more complete enumeration than any of them, may be given thus, novelty, ſublimity, beauty, proportion, imitation, harmony, ridicule, utility and virtue.

We ſhall now proceed to thoſe we have not ſpoken of before; imitation certainly gives great pleaſure to the mind, and that of itſelf, even independent of the object imitated. An exceedingly well imitated reſemblance of any object, of that which is indifferent or even diſagreeable in itſelf, gives the higheſt pleaſure, either from the act of compariſon as ſome ſay, or from its ſuggeſting the idea of ſkill and ingenuity in the imitator. The arts of painting and ſtatuary, derive their excellence from the perfection of imitation, and it is even thought that poetry and oratory may be conſidered in the ſame light, only that the firſt imitates form, and paſſions by the means of form, and the other imitates actions and affections by language, as the inſtrument-

Harmony is the moſt diſtinct and ſeparate of all the internal ſenſes that have been mentioned; it is concerned only in ſound, and therefore muſt be but remotely applicable to the writer and ſpeaker. What is remarkable, that although harmony may be ſaid to be of much importance in ſpeaking, there are many examples of the moſt excellent ſpeakers, that yet have no muſical ear at all, and I think the inſtances of thoſe who have a remarkably delicate muſical ear, and at the ſame time are agreeable ſpeakers, are not many.

The ſenſe of ridicule is not very eaſily explained, but it is eaſily underſtood when ſpoken of, becauſe it is univerſally felt. It differs in this from moſt other of our conſtitutional powers, that there is ſcarcely any man, who is not ſenſible of the ridiculous, or may be made eaſily ſenſible of it; and yet the number of good performers in the art of ridiculing others, or in wit and humor, is but very ſmall. The multitude who cannot follow ſpeculative reaſoning, and are hard to be moved by eloquence, are all ſtruck with works of humor. Moſt people are apt to think they can do ſomething in the way of humor; and yet we have many who render themſelves ridiculous by the attempt.

As to a ſenſe of virtue, by mentioning it, is by no means from my joining with thoſe who would place moral approbation entirely on the ſame footing with the internal ſenſes, that are the foundation of taſte. Hutchinſon and Shaftſbury incline very much this way; on the contrary I think we are evidently ſenſible that the morality of actions is a thing of a different ſpecies, and ariſes from the ſenſe of a law, and obligation of a ſuperior nature: yet I have mentioned it here, becauſe there is certainly a relation or connecting tie between the ſentiments of the one kind, and of the other. The beauties of nature, we are ſenſible, are greatly heightened, by adding to their delightful appearance, a reflection on their utility, and the benevolent intention of their author. In perſons capable of morality, as in human nature, we conſider fine features and an elegant carriage, as indications of the moral diſpoſition or the mental powers; and as the whole of the ſources of delight mentioned above, may be combined in a greater or leſſer degree, as novelty, ſublimity, beauty, &c. ſo the governing principle which ought to direct the application of the whole, is what gives them their higheſt excellence, and indeed only is their true perfection. The gratification even of our internal ſenſes, is highly improved, when united with taſte and elegance. As the moſt delicious food when ſerved up with neatneſs and order, accompanied with politeneſs of manners, and ſeaſoned with ſprightly converſation: in the ſame manner, the fine arts themſelves acquire a double beauty and higher reliſh, when they are inſeparably connected with, and made ſubſervient to purity of manners. An admirable poem, or an eloquent

diſcourſe, or a fine picture, would be ſtill more excellent, if the ſubject of them were intereſting and valuable, and when any of them are perverted to impious or wicked purpoſes, they are juſt objects of deteſtation.

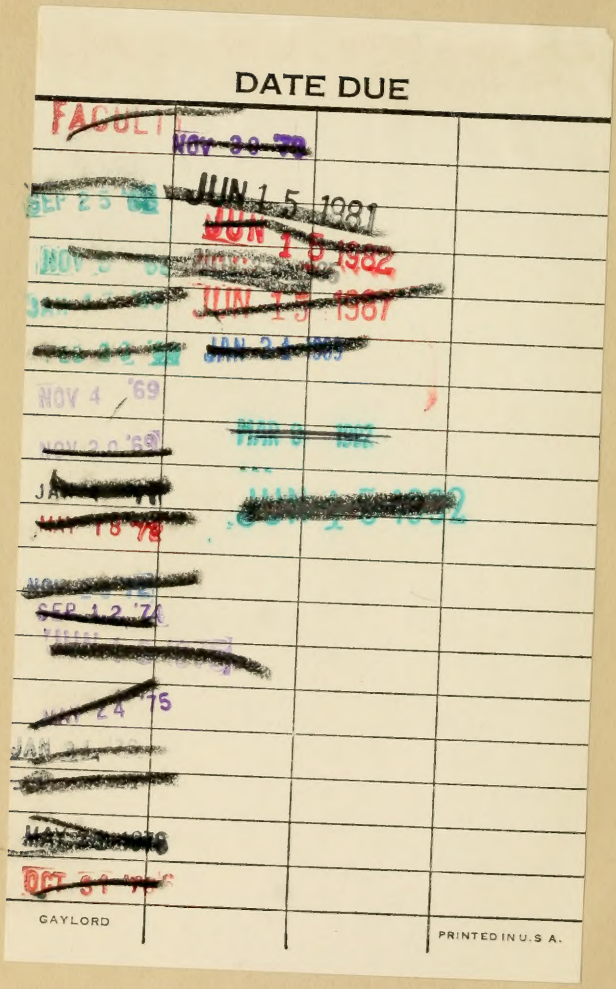
After having thus attempted the analyſis of the principles of taſte and elegance, I would obſerve, that as nature ſeems to delight in producing many great and different effects from ſimple cauſes, perhaps we may find an ultimate principle that governs all theſe. A French author has written a treatiſe called the Theory of agreeable Senſations, in which he ſays that the great principle is, whatever exerciſes our faculties, without fatiguing them, gives pleaſure; and that this principle may be applied to our bodily form, and to the conſtitution of our mind, to objects of external ſenſation, to objects of taſte, and even to our moral conduct. It may no doubt be carried through the whole of criticiſm, and we may ſay this ſtates the bounds between variety and uniformity, ſimplicity and intricacy, order, proportion and harmony.

Neither would it be difficult to ſhow that this principle may be applied to morality, and that an infinitely wiſe and gracious God had ſo ordered matters, that the moderate exerciſe of all our powers, ſhould produce at once, virtue and happineſs, and that the leaſt tranſgreſſion of the one muſt prove of neceſſity an injury to the other.

You may ſee from the preceding remarks, that the foundation is laid for taſte in our natures; yet is there great room for improvement and cultivation; by inveſtigating the grounds of approbation; by comparing one thing with another; by ſtudying the beſt examples; and by reflection and judgment, men may correct and refine their taſte upon the whole, or upon particular confined ſubjects.

Carrying taſte to a finical nicety in any one branch, is a thing not only undeſirable, but contemptible; the reaſon of which may be eaſily ſeen: when a perſon applies his attention ſo much to a matter of no great moment, it occaſions a neceſſary neglect of other things of much greater value. After you paſs a certain point, attachment to a particular purſuit is uſeleſs, and then it proceeds to be hurtful, and at laſt contemptible.

END OF VOLUME III.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